



PlayStation®2

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-AUSTRALIA

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- Auto Modellista
- Pac Man World 2
- Commandos 2

- Britney's Dance Beat
- Taz Wanted
- 2002 FIFA World Cup
- Turok Evolution
- Lara Croft Tomb Raider
- Spiderman trailer
- PLATINUM**
- This is Football 2002

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Will Brit-Brit's Dance
Beat hit the groove?
PS2 sweet talks the star!



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PlayStation[®]2

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-AUSTRALIA

ISSUE 03 / JUNE 2002

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WRITE TO:
Derwent Howard Publishing Pty, Ltd,
P.O. Box 1037
Bondi Junction, NSW, 2022
Telephone: 02 9386 4666
Fax: 02 9386 4288
Email: OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au

EDITORIAL
EDITOR: Max Everingham
max@derwenthoward.com.au

DEPUTY EDITOR: Richie Young
richie@derwenthoward.com.au

ART DIRECTOR: Mike Austin
DESIGNER: Jason Steel
CREATIVE DIRECTOR: Katrina Honor

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: Steve Polak,
Ken Spiller, Derek Lee, Peter
Jankulovski, Ed Dawson, Nick Ellis,
Ste Curran, Oliver Hurley, Steve Jarratt,
Jon Jordan, Martin Kitts, David
McCarthy, Paul Rose, Keith Stuart,
Mark Walbank, Karl Witherton
CONTRIBUTING DESIGNER:
Tina Glencross
CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS:
Martin Burton, Stuart McCall
CONTRIBUTING ILLUSTRATORS:
Willi Barras, Daniel Mackie
JAPANESE OFFICE: Amos Wong

SUBSCRIPTIONS
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ADVERTISING DIRECTOR: Paul Hardy
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THE SUITS
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR: Debra Taylor
DIRECTOR: Jim Flynn
DIRECTOR: Nathan Berkley

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MAX'S TOP 2

**MOH: Mountain
(EA) New**

An amazingly atmospheric game that is scary enough to put anyone off joining the real Army. Unless we get invaded by some nefarious troop of hegemonistic, hatred-filled fascists, of course.

**Penalty Shoot Out
(EA) New**

I alternate playing this with MOH to remind me of the dire penalties of getting caught. Keeps me on my game.



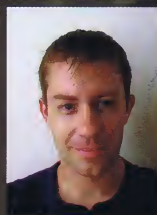
RICHIE'S TOP 2

**2002 FIFA World Cup
(EA) Out now**

Seeing that I've jeopardised the publication of OPS2 due to hours of wasted time trying to win the World Cup with our designer-extraordinaire Mike, I'd say World Cup fever's kicked in!

**Extraordinary Game
(EA) New**

It's still a while yet - but this game is destined for great things. Since I played it, nothing has managed yet to live up to it... Mark your diaries now!



"consoles have outgrown the old description of games machine"

EDITOR'S LETTER



I was watching TV the other day and a US Army airman was complaining that the helicopter he flew wasn't a challenge any more now that it was "fly by wire, like playing a video game". He was a pilot of the new Boeing

Sikorsky RAH-66 Comanche, a futuristic, highly sophisticated killing platform by anyone's standards. And, apparently, too much like a video game. Or should that be 'video games are too much like the real thing'? On this month's cover, for instance, we have Medal of Honor: Frontline, a game that simulates the horrors of war from a first person, in your face, perspective and with more realism than ever before. On PlayStation 2, we have racing titles that real race drivers use to become familiar with the circuits they'll be navigating around the following weekend and sports titles that pros use to put new strategies to the test or spot opponents' weaknesses. There are basketball, soccer and even surfing simulations that can give you a good idea of the basics of the real sport - and actually make you a better participant - simply by playing them.

The point being it's as if consoles like PlayStation 2 have outgrown the old description of 'games machine'. A lot of these so-called games are not really just games any more. Many provide experiences that are absorbing, challenging, and demanding with breathtaking authenticity. Some of them can teach us real-life skills: hypothesis forming, testing and recalculation, for instance, how good racing driving is all about rhythm, not simply going fast, or even 'slicing the pie' when checking a room containing a potentially threatening presence! These are machines that can provide simulated experiences with unprecedented realism where the description 'game' feels inadequate. We need new nomenclature! Write in and tell us what the new term to replace 'videogames' should be and, to kick it off, here's my effort: SIMEX. That's 'simulated experience', abbreviated in time-honoured Japlish game industry fashion. Or maybe I'm taking it all too seriously. Game on.

ME

MAX EVERINGHAM
Editor



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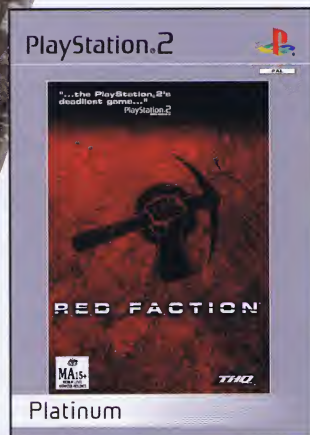
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ON THE DVD

PLAYABLE DEMOS

OTHER MAGAZINES LET YOU WATCH, OPS2 LETS YOU PLAY...

Huge! We're sure you'll agree, this month's demo disc is impressive. Not only in terms of sheer size, but the quality of the games that we've managed to

secure for you is second to none.

Where else are you going to find nine playable demos on one single disc? Nowhere! Remember, having the very latest gaming experiences is as easy as popping down to your local newsagent every month and picking up a copy of *OPS2*.

We can guarantee that you'll have the best (and latest!) in videogames on tap. Test 'em out for yourself, or risk spending up big and picking up an expensive drinks coaster.

As we approach the middle of the year, and with the impending announcements from the world's electronics and software companies at E3 in Los Angeles, the games are only set to get even better. *OPS2* is primed to reflect all of this through each and every one of our demo discs.

Play *MOH: Frontline*, *Frequency*, *Smash Court Tennis Pro*, *Redcard Soccer* and the latest *Jedi Starfighter* game this month and be sure to check out all of the videos, including a behind-the-scenes look at the making of *Tomb Raider: Angel of Darkness*!

Stick with *OPS2* and you'll be in for a great ride.

Richie Young
Deputy Editor

PS To use this DVD, load it up on your PS2. Then scroll between games and rolling demos with the **↓** and **↑** keys. To choose within a section use **←** and **→**. Press **ⓧ** to start up your choice. Please note, you may have to reset your PS2 after some demos.

PLAY DEMO ONE

THE CONTROLS

L-STICK - FORWARD, BACK, STRAFE

R-STICK - LOOK, TURN

ⓧ JUMP

⓪ MELEE

⓪ CHANGE WEAPON

⓪ ACTION

⓪ ZOOM

⓪ CORNER PEEK

⓪ FIRE

⓪ RELOAD

⓪ CROUCH

⓪ PRUNE

⓪ EXIT

MOH: FRONTLINE

Publisher: EA/ Game type: First-person shooter/ Out: June/ Players: 1

THE GAME

Set over three episodes, the WWII action begins with a D-Day beach-landing scene, then progresses through France, Holland and culminates in Deutschland as you and your allied band of brothers track down an experimental Nazi jet fighter. Featuring some of the best visuals ever seen in any console videogame (just take a look at those particle effects!), unrelenting Nazi-bashing and vastly improved enemy AI, *Frontline* is proving to be everything we'd hoped for. And then some.

THE DEMO

Experience the intense first level of the game's second campaign, set in a French war-ravaged town. Your objectives are to: pick up the resistance drop under the tree at the start, provide covering fire from the church tower, secure the submarine fuelling roster, locate the submarine fuelling dock; and stow away in the submarine's cargo. Handy hint: Jump into the rear of the crashed jeep at the start of the level and man the mounted machine gun to blitz the enemy.

PLAY DEMO 02

THE CONTROLS

D-PAD - CHANGE TRACKS

L-STICK - ROTATE CAMERA

⓪ MULTIPLIER

⓪ LEFT NOTES

⓪ MIDDLE NOTES

⓪ RIGHT NOTES

FREQUENCY

PUBLISHER SCEE
GAME TYPE RHYTHM
OUT JUNE
PLAYERS 1 (FULL GAME 1-4)

THE GAME

One of the most innovative and catchy games to be released for years. This gem takes the genre to new, hip levels.

THE DEMO

Plenty of choices on our exclusive demo this month. We allow you to choose either 'Game' or 'Remix' and tracks from both No Doubt and Paul Oakenfold are here for your manipulation!

PLAY DEMO 03

THE CONTROLS

L-STICK - MOVE

⓪ GROUND PASS

⓪ SWITCH PLAYER

⓪ AIR PASS

⓪ SLIDE TACKLE

⓪ SHOOT

⓪ CONSERVATIVE TACKLE

⓪ THROUGH BALL/SLIDE TACKLE

⓪ HOLD FOR LOLLIPOP/TAP

⓪ FOR SPIN

⓪ SHIMMY

⓪ KNOCK AHEAD

⓪ DELIBERATE DIVE

THIS IS SOCCER 02

PUBLISHER SCEE
GAME TYPE SPORTS
OUT NOW
PLAYERS 1 (FULL GAME 1-8)

THE GAME

Any gamer will be impressed with the level of detail. The stadiums and players on show look superb.

THE DEMO

Our demo features the first half of a showdown between traditional rivals France and Australia. This is your chance to go wild about Harry!

PLAY DEMO 04

THE CONTROLS

- L-STICK** - MOVE
- ⊕ JUMP (HOLD TO GLIDE)
- ⊙ ACTION
- △ ATTACK
- PAUSE
- ⏏ HEAD UP DISPLAY
- ⏏ DUCK

PETER PAN: RETURN TO NEVER LAND

PUBLISHER SCE
GAME TYPE PLATFORMER
OUT NOW
PLAYERS 1

THE GAME

Peter Pan is somewhat of a comeback king, having just starred in a new animated flick and this new PS2 adventure game.

THE DEMO

This is the first jungle level. Get the treasure and attack the pirates!

PLAY DEMO 05

THE CONTROLS

- L-STICK** - MOVE
- ⊕ SERVE, RETURN
- ⊙ LOB

SMASH COURT TENNIS

PUBLISHER SCE
GAME TYPE SPORTS
OUT JUNE
PLAYERS 1-2 [FULL GAME 1-4]

THE GAME

All of the top pros and tournaments makes this the very best tennis sim that will be available for the PS2.

THE DEMO

Our demo will lock you out after a five minute session, but it's still plenty to get your palms sweaty!

PLAY DEMO 06

THE CONTROLS

- L-STICK** - STEERING
- ⊕ ACCELERATE
- ⊙ BRAKE
- ⊙ HANDBRAKE
- ⊙ CAMERA
- ⊕ GEAR SHIFT UP
- ⊙ GEAR SHIFT DOWN
- ⏏ REAR VIEW

SUPER TRUCKS

PUBLISHER JESTER
GAME TYPE RACING
OUT MAY
PLAYERS 1 [FULL GAME 1-2]

THE GAME

Not just your average racing game, this game is all about big truckin' action!

THE DEMO

You get two laps of some of the most frantic racing that you'll find in any videogame. These huge mummies aren't the nimblest of machines to handle, so don't hang around. Anyone scared of jostling better harden up!

PLAY DEMO 07

THE CONTROLS

- L-STICK** - SWING CLUB
- R-STICK** - SPIN DIRECTION
- D-PAD** - MOVE, AIMING MARKER
- ⊕ CAMERA VIEW
- ⊙ ZOOM, MULLIGAN
- ⊙ RESET TARGET
- ⊕ POWER BOOST
- ⊙ SPIN CONTROL
- ⊙ SWITCH CLUBS

TIGER WOODS 2002

PUBLISHER EA SPORTS
GAME TYPE SPORTS
OUT NOW
PLAYERS 1-2 [FULL GAME 1-4]

THE GAME

This is the latest in the series and by all standards, it has proven to be the best.

THE DEMO

Lucky you! Our demo allows you to play three entire holes, including Pebble Beach, Sawgrass and the 2nd hole at Black Rock Cove. We're going to the 19th!

PLAY DEMO 08

THE CONTROLS

- L-STICK** - MOVE
- ⊕ CHANGE PLAYER
- ⊙ GROUND PASS
- ⊙ SLIDE TACKLE
- ⊙ SHOOT
- ⊙ AGGRESSIVE TACKLE
- ⊕ THROUGH BALL
- ⊙ STOMP TACKLE
- ⊙ LOB
- ⊕ HURDLE
- ⊙ STEAL
- ⊕ BOOST
- ⊙ TURBO

REDCARD SOCCER

PUBLISHER MIDWAY
GAME TYPE SPORTS
OUT MAY
PLAYERS 1-2

THE GAME

Takes the sport of soccer and throws it in a blender with Ultimate Fighting Championship! This really is soccer with a difference!

THE DEMO

You have three minutes to score and take out as many players as you can! There are South America, North American and European sides to choose from. Go on! Get into it!

PLAY DEMO 09

THE CONTROLS

- D-PAD** → FORCE POWER
- D-PAD** ↑ FORCE POWER
- L-STICK** - FLIGHT
- R-STICK** - ROLL
- ⊕ LASERS
- ⊙ FIRE FORCE POWER
- ⊙ AUTO TARGET
- ⊙ WINGMATE
- ⊙ ROOM
- ⊙ BRAKE
- ⊕ BOOST
- ⏏ PAUSE

JEDI STAR FIGHTER

PUBLISHER LUCAS ARTS
GAME TYPE SHOOTER
OUT NOW
PLAYERS 1 [FULL GAME 1-2]

THE GAME

This is the sequel to the popular original released for the PS2 in early 2001.

THE DEMO

Watch the Intro movie, then you'll find yourself in the thick of the action as Mission 5 of the full version kicks into gear! You'll be able to test out your new Force Powers as you defend yourself from Hex Missiles and Sabaoth Fighters.

EXTRAS

THE MAKING OF: TOMB RAIDER: THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS

In case you hadn't heard already, Lara's back. This atmospheric 'Making Of' film gives us a first intriguing glimpse of the new altogether darker episode in Ms Croft's Life.

DEMO MOVIES

SPIDER-MAN

One of the biggest blockbusters of the year, and one of the coolest 3D adventures we've seen. Absolutely superb!

AUTO MODELLISTA

This is already causing a buzz in the OPS2 office and for good reason.

BRITNEY'S DANCE BEAT

This'll be good for gawking at the Princess of Pop, if nothing else...

2002 FIFA WORD CUP

If only Muscat, Harry, Viduka, Vidmar and Stan were there to cheer on...

COMMANDOS 2

Wanna know why this game has been so long coming and is so highly anticipated? Then take a look at this!

TUROK EVOLUTION

Hanging out with dinosaurs has never looked this good in a game!

PAC-MAN WORLD 2

The one and only original is poised for his latest (and greatest) comeback!

TAZ WANTED

Tasmania's very own star now has his own game. *Taz Wanted* is a great kids' game!

WORDS: PAUL FITZPATRICK

MEDAL OF HONOUR: FRONTLINE

Starting off bang in the middle of D-Day and ending up deep within enemy territory, could this be the most hardcore MOH yet?

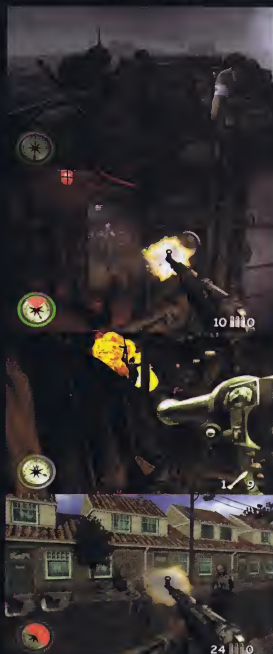
Publisher EA
Developer EA LA
Players 1
Release 31 May

PREVIEW CONTENTS

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Saving Private Ryan goes interactive with this WWII epic.
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You're sly, you're a raccoon - you're Sly Raccoon, master thief.
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The game named after a sports complex that's named after a French aviator.
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Teeny bopping goes megastar. Just like sand, the girl gets everywhere.
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Crash Ban's folks attempt to redefine the platform genre.
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A skating title that promises to knock the Hawk on his ass. This we have to see.
- 22 Commandos 2**
Infiltrate enemy strongholds with a varied bunch of capable fighting men.

DEBRIEF

A little taste of Medal of Honor: Frontline's most outstanding missions.



1. Your Finest Hour

The hellish opening mission that sees you trying to make it from your destroyed landing craft to the German gun emplacements as they shred your comrades. Harrowing.

2. Special Cargo

Secreted aboard a German U-Boat, you must negotiate your way through its cramped decks to sabotage its torpedo room and make your escape. Very tense.

3. Enemy Mine

You plus a bazooka hurtling in a mine cart through Nazi-infested caverns. Try aiming as you round a corner at 60 mph. A tricky, adrenaline-fuelled journey.

4. Yard by Yard

Picking your way through an occupied, residential area of Arnhem, you must destroy a number of roadblocks to enable a truck filled with medical supplies to get to the Allied troops who need them. Thrilling urban warfare.

If you can keep him safe from enemy fire, Chuckles here will blow a nice big hole in the German defences.



Can't stay in the water, don't want to go onto the beach.

MOH's non-playable characters go about their business regardless of you.

Picture the scene. Under a brooding, slate grey sky, a fleet of squat landing craft approach a heavily fortified Normandy beach. As the camera swoops, one of the buffeted Allied planes roars overhead. Distracted briefly, our view arcs back down and suddenly we're looking through the eyes of one of the soldiers, cold and seasick, counting down the seconds to D-Day and the bloody triumphant turning point of World War II.

It's a stupendous way to begin the latest chapter in EA's highly respected WWII FPS franchise and sets out *Frontline's* hardcore agenda from the word go. The combination of PS2's enhanced specs and a very definite historical backdrop (the D-Day Invasion of occupied France and the subsequent push inland known as Operation Market Garden) make this the most realistic, most atmospheric *MOH* yet.

Essentially, the gameplay will be familiar to anyone who's followed the adventures of Jimmy Patterson on PSone. There are five distinct levels subdivided into at least three missions apiece, and all build towards a crucially important showdown in the fight against the Third Reich. This time it centres around the Nazis' very real flying wing experimental jet fighter, the Horten XO-IX, and will take players on a tense journey from Northern France to Holland and then finally deep into Germany itself.

Admirable historical research aside, *MOH*'s, like its predecessors, a cracking game to play. The two D-Day prologue missions where you play as a new character, Private Barnes, are disorienting, noisy, visceral experiences. Perhaps best described as an interactive version of the opening beach assault in *Saving Private Ryan*, this chaotic chapter still manages to retain *MOH*'s familiar, drip-fed objective structure. And here, as in the main body of the game, you are constantly reminded that this is no one-man war. During a couple of missions you are just one of a squad of Allied soldiers entering a hostile area. Fighting alongside your fellows, against the game's much smarter enemy soldiers (they dart around to avoid shots, they remember your location, they spread out to make it harder to hit them all) is a thrilling

experience. Not that *MOH*'s abandoned its core values of solitary espionage and sabotage. Far from it. You'll find yourself inching through plenty of cramped, Nazi-ridden environments. And, just as EA's own *James Bond 007* in... *Agent Under Fire* enlivened its FPS with vehicle-based missions, so does *Frontline* (see Debrief).

Graphically, the game is a quantum leap from the earlier titles in the series. All the improvements, from the enhanced level of scenery interactivity to facial animations on individual soldiers and those all-important explosive particle effects, work towards a single aim: authenticity. The same can be said about *MOH*'s orchestral score and the ordnance-heavy sound design. Speaking of sound, anyone with more than a single speaker setup will be rapt with this game.

In fact, this game is shaping up to be everything you loved about its predecessors, only more so. The only potential downside so far is the lack of confirmation that this episode will feature multiplayer maps. Let's hope EA doesn't ration our fun by excluding them in the finished article. They say war is hell, and on this evidence, *Medal of Honor: Frontline* will be taking us there and back in spectacular fashion. □

ON TARGET? MEDAL OF HONOUR: FRONTLINE

EA's decision to pile on the atmosphere with *Medal of Honor: Frontline* makes it the most hardcore of the series yet. We can't wait.



ATMOSPHERE

Leadon skies, tracer bullets, underground complexes. Tense.



AI

Let's hope your squad is as smart as the enemy's.



AUTHENTICITY

Were the British in WWII? It sure doesn't look like it.



THE REAL 'BRIDGE TOO FAR'

Medal of Honor: Frontline unfolds against the backdrop of World War II's Operation Market Garden. Read on for the full history lesson...



Operation Market Garden was the deceptively innocent name for one of World War II's most audacious military campaigns. After the bloody but rapid success of the Allies' invasion of occupied France during D-Day, the German army had regrouped and was making progress inland almost impossible. General Montgomery, the British Commander in Europe, suggested that a risky, lightning attack by airborne troops behind German lines near a handful of strategically important bridges could give the Allies just the push they needed to overwhelm the enemy. However, once troops were parachuted into occupied Holland on 17 September 1944, a combination of bad luck and very well entrenched German defences made a successful outcome virtually impossible.

The turning point came at the Nijmegen bridge (featured in one of *MOH*'s missions). Facing harsh resistance, Allied armoured divisions were unable to capture the far side of the bridge and enter the town of Arnhem to meet up with their airborne troops. Eventually, and with victory almost within reach, the Allies were forced to pull back. The operation that could have ended the Second World War by Christmas 1944 was over and it would be four months before British and American troops crossed the Rhine again.

SLY RACCOON

Sly Raccoon is the latest 3D platformer that's likely to steal your heart.

Publisher Sony
Developer Sucker Punch
Players 1
Release September



No doubt you will have noticed the 3D platformers that are starting to land thick and fast in your local games store. First, there was good ol' *Crash Bandicoot*, then came *Jak and Daxter*, *Insomniac* soon followed by announcing *Ratchet and Clank*

(previewed on page 18), and now *Sly Raccoon* has appeared, seemingly from almost nowhere!

Tucked away in a tiny games studio in Seattle, USA, Sucker Punch has been working hard on *Sly Raccoon* for almost two years. The project can be regarded as one of the best-kept secrets in the videogame world, and the recent unveiling reveals a fantastic platformer that manages to incorporate all the right ingredients with a fresh dose of gameplay innovation.

Unfortunately, many gamers are probably likely to dismiss *Sly Raccoon* prematurely. At first, it certainly does appear to be 'yet another' game done and played before, with just a new lead character to master. It does end there though, as the game has successfully blended traditional 3D platformer elements with the premise of stealth. You see, Sly is a professional thief and much of the game is played by gaining access to buildings to steal various kinds of loot. For the moralistic amongst us though, there's no need to worry! Sly takes a leaf from Robin Hood's book and only steals from Super Villains. Steal from the rich? *OPS2* likes that thought!

Judging by screenshots, it's not difficult to see how strongly inspired this cartoony romp is by none other than *Metal Gear Solid*. For code that still has some way of being completed and optimised, *OPS2* was very impressed. Level designs have all been carefully considered and using and interacting with objects becomes increasingly important as difficulty increases.

Sucker Punch maintains that its game is not technically 'cel-shaded', although for all intents and purposes that is exactly how it appears. Not only is Sly very likable, but the game is visually superb. It moves along smoothly and the lighting effects also impress - something that other cel-shaded games aren't recognised for.

Environments are completely interactive, and objects can be manipulated and broken. Sly has all the basic manoeuvres that you'd expect of him, but he's also equipped with tools (to help him break into areas) as well as techniques to avoid detection throughout the levels. One of the most frequently used is the wall-view and sneak, where he moves along the edges of buildings. Dynamic weather and lighting effects have also been included, and ground water affects the way you approach conquering tasks.

It's won't be too long before *Sly Raccoon* is polished up and the next game you'll find in stores. At this stage, this will be a solid adventure on par with anything we've seen. □

ON TARGET? SLY RACCOON

Will this game have what it takes to put it 'over the edge', and set it apart from the rest? Well, it is looking the goods...



GRAPHICS

The cel-shading appearance is a strength.



HOW SLY IS SLY?

One of the quirkiest characters we've seen for quite a while.

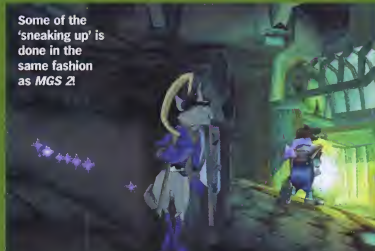


GAMEPLAY

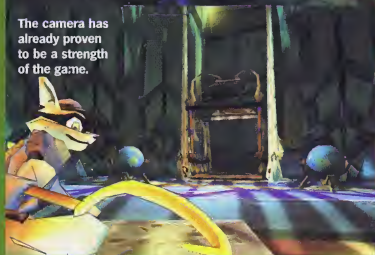
Offers a new approach to an old game. Very varied and lengthy!



Some of the 'sneaking up' is done in the same fashion as *MGS 2*



The camera has already proven to be a strength of the game.



He looks like a thief with that mask. Oh, hang on... he's a raccoon! Geddit?



Sly carries around a 'theft tool'. This opens up puzzle options!



One of the more innovative levels - you move about inside a barrel.



The graphics are very appealing and unique throughout.



Most of the game centres on accessing and retrieving loot.



LOOKS WEIRD. SOUNDS GREAT.

The New Nokia 5510 doesn't look much like a personal stereo. It really doesn't look like a phone, either. But it's both and a lot more; a text and games machine, WAP browser, FM radio and digital music player. Whichever way you look at it, we call it *human* technology™. Join Club Nokia and get the most out of your Nokia 5510. Download ringing tones, fun picture messages, screen savers and new levels of Nokia games. Join free at www.nokia.com.au

WORDS: MAX EVERINGHAM

NEXT GENERATION TENNIS

A next generation name for a next generation console. But can it ace the opposition?

Publisher Wanadoo
Developer Carapace
Players 1-2
Release May

With tennis videogames, it's hard to know which way to go. Do you take aim at the *Virtua Tennis* type titles that are pure arcade but still give a credibly deep game, or do you go for a full-on simulation of the sport, forgoing flashy

effects for an attempt at conveying the gruelling blood-and-guts nature of modern tennis? With strawberries and cream and breaks for rain, it's a tough call, to be sure, and one that developer Carapace seems to make, but then maybe doesn't.

Described as a 'pure simulation game that will confer to all the players real fun', *NGT(Next Generation Tennis)* is clearly hedging its bets at this early stage, promising a gritty simulation to the hardcore tennis fans but then quickly reassuring us tennis wimps that it's going to bring heaps of laughs and be a snap to control. Promising no fewer than four overt game modes, ten representations of real-life players with authentic modelling and characteristic animation and the possibility of getting stuck into singles, doubles and even mixed doubles matches, *NGT* certainly talks the talk. All stadiums will be accurately represented.

The famous names include Gustavo Kuerten and Sébastien Grosjean. Who? That'll be the simulation aspect of the title kicking in, we fear. Still, there's the Brit Tim Henman in the game too (also gracing the game's box cover), who is clearly a lovely man but not quite the fearsome tennis warrior the Poms need to conquer the world rankings, eh? One intriguing aspect promised in the finished game is a kind of 'online and LAN feature'. According to Take 2, this will 'allow the player to see his position on the worldwide ranking', which suggests more of a bragging rights facility rather than actually being able to challenge and play other people in an online match. □

ON TARGET? NEXT GENERATION TENNIS

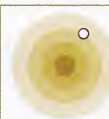
We could do with another tennis game on the PS2, but will *NGT* offer anything more than we already have with *Smash Court Pro*?



LICENCES
Great - it has the official licences of both the US Open and Roland Garros.



GRAPHICS
Player likenesses look pretty reasonable at this stage but other elements are a bit sparse.



ONLINE
There are rumblings of online features, but there are no firm details as yet.

COURTING SUCCESS

Wanadoo promises that the ball physics will accurately reflect the real-life playing characteristics of each court type.



On grass courts, such as Wimbledon pictured above, the ball will move faster than it does on clay, asphalt or concrete surfaces. So you have less time to react, basically. The ball will also bounce a lot lower and so the court type usually favours serve-and-volley players. On the downside, the surface gradually develops very diverse bounce characteristics during a match and can get slippery when wet, throwing up more than a few unwelcome surprises!



In complete contrast to grass, serve-and-volley players typically have less success on slow clay courts like at the French Open. Clay surfaces are granular, encouraging players to slide when running. For this reason, 'wrong-footing' your opponent on clay (and grass) can be a good strategy. Just don't try it too often on hard surfaces. The average length of points tends to be longer at the pro level on clay type courts as the medium speed and higher bounce encourage baseline rallies.



The players go in for all that air punching nonsense of the real life lot.



As seen from a blimp, to really show off the drop shot.



The stadia are faithfully recreated.



The dynamic camera keeps things fun.

PREVIEW

BRITNEY'S DANCE BEAT

WORDS: PAUL FITZPATRICK

BRITNEY'S DANCE BEAT

She's a pop star, a film star (maybe) and now Britney is the star of her own videogame. You go girl.

Publisher THQ
Developer Metro Corporation
Players 1 - 2
Release 24 May



ACCESS ALL AREAS

You may think listening to Britney Spears' music is reward enough for playing. But there are Backstage Passes to win...

Dear diary... It's one of those Ironies in life that, although it is perfectly okay as a hairy-palmed male to watch Britney Spears videos, actually listening to her songs is enough to have your GTA3 privileges revoked. Which is, to quote the 21-year-old millionaire herself, 'crazy' because it means that a sizeable chunk of the population is on course to miss one hell of a feisty spin on the rhythm action genre.

Pop the disc into the PS2 and, as if by magic, you're transported into a primary-coloured world populated by Britney-dancer-wannabes. A place where a flawless audition will put you within a sequin's breadth of La Spears, and two left feet will land you on the pavement.

Flashdance-style glory is pursued via the game's three main modes - Practice, Audition and Multiplayer - and each of these is centred around five Britney floor-fillers (or ten including unlockable remixes). *Baby One More Time*, *Oops!... I Did It Again*, *Stronger*, *Overprotected* and *I'm A Slave 4 U* may not be fixtures in your multi-changer but gathered together here it's hard to deny their peerless pop credentials. There's also talk of a PS2-exclusive bonus and an as yet unnamed sixth track making its way into the game but, for now, this remains unconfirmed by publisher THQ. Let's just hope it's not Britney's mauling of *I Love Rock 'n' Roll*.




The game pits two dancers (picked from an available group of six) against each other in an audition face-off. As your track of choice plays - accompanied by video clips from the promo on a monitor positioned behind the action - you have to hit the Dual Shock 2 buttons in time with the on-screen prompts. These appear in a neatly minimalist circular window as opposed to the customary top to bottom sweep of other rhythm action titles, leaving the majority of

the space free for the dancers to fill with their interpretations of Britney's signature moves. Pull off a ten-strong combo and the camera will swoop towards your opponent allowing you a breather and piling the pressure on your rival. Keep hitting your stride and a polygonal Britney will appear as a triumphant sign that you are 'in sync (as it were) with the lady herself. If, by the end of the routine, the on-screen swing-o-meter rests in your half of the screen, you win the audition and receive points which eventually add up to open backstage passes (see Access All Areas). Fail to cut the rug - or the mustard for that matter - and it's back to the Practice mode.

So, ten tracks, six dancers and sore thumbs all round. It's about time the traditional branch of rhythm action games got a proper pop makeover. Dancer animation is good, as is the overall design, and with Ms Spears herself giving you pep talks as you trip the light fantastic, this is shaping up to be an unconventional post-pub showdown. You could even say it was born to make you happy. Well, you could. □

ON TARGET? BRITNEY'S DANCE BEAT

It may not wow the State Of Emergency demographic but Britney's Dance Beat is looking to be a fine and funky rhythm action title.

 <p>SONGS Only five original tracks but every one a little pop gem.</p>	 <p>GRAPHICS Surprisingly smooth in a genre not famed for top visuals.</p>	 <p>DIFFICULTY With Britney's videos on show during play, you have no idea...</p>
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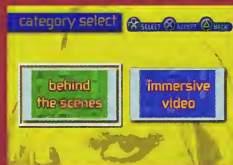
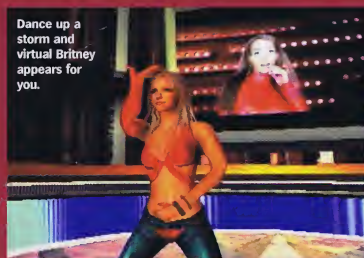


Aside from the unbridled joy of dancing (ahem) the main prize in Britney's Dance Beat is a set of four Backstage Passes. Each of these unlocks a pair of bonus videos. The behind-the-scenes clips are surprisingly generous insights into Britney's life on the road, culled from candid footage of her US tour last year. The real finds though are the accompanying Immersive Video clips. These were filmed exclusively during rehearsals and soundchecks using a 360-degree camera, allowing you to explore the video by turning full circle and zooming in and out while Britney and her hand practice the numbers. A nice bonus for fans and leery perverts alike.

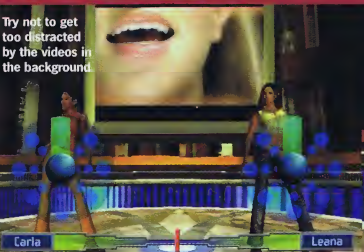
You must keep the performance balance shifted in your favour.



Dance up a storm and virtual Britney appears for you.



Try not to get too distracted by the videos in the background.



Shake that booty.

WORDS: RICHIE YOUNG

RATCHET AND CLANK

Spyro's creators are back. This time, they've brought a pair of weapon-wielding rascals!

Publisher Sony
Developer Insomniac
Players 1
Release November

RIGHT HAND MAN

Mark Cerny has been involved in the world's biggest videogames. Pictured here with Insomniac President Ted Price, *OP2* caught up with him for a chat.



How'd you get involved with Insomniac?

Ted and I met in 1994 when Ted had taken his life savings and bought a lot of equipment to develop videogames. They were looking for a publisher for their product. At that point, I was working at Universal Interactive Studios and I thought these guys were the most talented amateurs that I'd ever seen. So, Universal did a multi-product deal with them. The games that Insomniac created were *Disruptor* and *Spyro the Dragon*. I was Executive Producer of those games. I got out of Universal in 1998 and Insomniac continued with them through 2000. I went and started a small videogames company for consultancy along with the producer of the *Spyro* series, Michael Jones. We were first hired by Universal to produce *Spyro 2* and then by Ted, to do some design work for *Spyro 3*. And then I was contracted to do some miscellaneous design work for *Ratchet*.

What other titles have you been involved with?

I started in the videogame industry in 1982, at Atari Coin-Op. *Major Havoc*, *Marble Madness* – that was my baby. I then went and worked for Sega for seven years. If you remember the 3D glass system that went with the Master System – that was something that I drove at Sega and I set up the Sega Technical Institute. After the *Sonic the Hedgehog* team fell apart I re-assembled the group in the United States and *Sonic the Hedgehog 2*, 3 and 4 resulted from that group. I was executive producer on the *Crash Bandicoot* series, and now I'm working on *Ratchet and Clank*.

Being based in Hollywood, have you ever thought to work in movies?

I love games. The way that I got into the games industry was that I went to the University of Berkeley. I started taking classes there at age 13 and I wasn't as interested in schoolwork as I was in my two hobbies – which were programming and playing videogames. I managed to turn these two hobbies into a job!

I worked at Universal Studios for a number of years. It could have turned out to be anything [what I ended up doing] but the fact is, I absolutely love videogames.

Do you still have 'hands on' involvement when it comes to 'making' them?

We work very closely together. In terms of what I do, it goes from looking at production methodology or as Ted puts it, I look for what's going to "bite us in the ass". I make sure we prototype everything and build the gameplay, make sure the art works out. I also have my own little piece of the project.

Will you look to work in other genres in terms of videogames?

Heading into the future, it would be nice to do some products that had some different elements. As far as what Ted would like to do down the track, that's just up to him. I just hope that I get invited along for the ride! But what Insomniac's done here is add elements of adventure and RPG into an action game, and that's pretty revolutionary.

For the team at Insomniac, the challenge of putting the past behind them (*Spyro the Dragon*) and forging ahead with the likes of *Ratchet and Clank* must have been a daunting one. Considering the huge reputation that the guys earned themselves with this early effort, expectations for their first PS2 project were understandably high. *OP2* visited Insomniac HQ and came away with the distinct impression that they'll come through with flying colours.

Insomniac themselves claim that they 'raised the bar' when the process began. Indeed, company representatives were of the opinion that *Ratchet and Clank* is so advanced, that it will be held in the same regard as the mind-blowing *Mario 64* was when it was first unleashed on N64 owners. *OP2* certainly believes that Insomniac has made a fantastic effort featuring plenty of innovation, although the code that we played didn't quite meet these lofty predictions.

Even beyond the move to utilise two main characters, there are obvious similarities that can be drawn with *Jak and Daxter* from the Naughty Dog team. Historically, the two companies share a lot (and even share staff members!) although both claim that neither was aware of the other's projects. There are even striking facial similarities between Jak and Ratchet!

The story behind the game goes something like this: Ratchet is a mechanic on a futuristic planet. Clank falls from the sky (amongst some other junk) and Ratchet befriends him while searching through the debris. From here, the relationship develops as Clank rides on Ratchet's back (backpack style) for basically the remainder of the adventure.

From here, *Ratchet and Clank* work in tandem. With



The entire game has a robotic theme running throughout.



All of the background objects operate in real time!

OP2 had most fun running amok with the flame thrower. You will too!



the mechanical theme running throughout as the story unfolds, Clank is able to be upgraded and altered by collecting and buying powerups. Collecting currency to spend on items forms the crux of the main game. For instance, Clank is able to be used a type of helicopter in some levels that allows him to glide longer distances in certain sections of the game. This allows you to add new weapons and moves to your repertoire and move further into the adventure.

OPS2 found that using weaponry is a primary (and somewhat surprising) gameplay element. Defeating the enemies littered throughout each level plays a major role in the experience. The flame thrower is a particularly fun weapon and roasting opponents can be hilarious. Some foes though, showed very little intelligence and eliminating them was too easy once their pattern was figured out.

Some work is still required, although you can begin to anticipate a brilliant 3D character game on the horizon. □

ON TARGET? RATCHET & CLANK

It's all getting too confusing! So many 3D characters running about the place... Will this dynamic duo really cut the mustard?



GRAPHICS

Insomniac have introduced intricate detail. Look closely!



CHARACTERS

Less annoying tendencies than Jak and the other bloke...



GAMEPLAY

There's something to do the entire time and is quite challenging.



This Helicopter add-on you get for Clank, opens up entirely new levels to explore. Absolutely superb fun.



We think that Ratchet has distinct similarities with Jak. Don't you?

WORDS: DEREK LEE

AGGRESSIVE INLINE

Inline skating or rollerblading?
Who cares when a game
is as good as this?

Publisher Z-Axis
Developer Acclaim
Players 1-2
Release TBC

Sick of seeing yet another extreme game featuring a two-bit celebrity and formulaic gameplay? So are we. Which is why *OPS2* is stoked to say that *Aggressive Inline* does away with just relying on a celebrity name to lend some credibility to a title.

Rest assured though, you'll still be able to play as your favourite top inline skater, with pros such as Chris Edwards and Aussie boy Matt Salerno featured, though the skaters cannot be customised in any way. For all you hot-blooded males out there, you can even choose to play as a Britney lookalike character who comes complete with pigtails, mini skirt and jiggling cleavage. Obviously the developers had a little too much time on their hands.

Aggressive Inline features the standard career, points-based and free skate modes. No surprises in the career mode, where the objectives range from scoring set points totals and performing certain tricks off specific objects, to finding hidden objects; all to unlock new stages and characters. While *Aggressive Inline* follows this *Tony Hawk* blueprint to some extent, it also adds some refreshing twists to the stale formula we've all seen before. Firstly, rather than having the objectives handed to you on a platter at the start of each course, you'll have to search for characters and objects scattered throughout the courses and interact with them via an action button in order to receive your objectives. Secondly, there's no time limit on any of the courses. Instead, your run lasts for as long as you maintain the level of a power meter, which of course is fuelled by the number of tricks and combos you pull off and their degree of difficulty. Finally, instead of allocating points at the end of each run to boost attributes, *Aggressive Inline* uses an experience points system that awards you with XP for a trick category each time you pull off that certain type of

trick. Just like in real life, practice makes perfect.

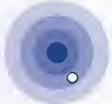


Aggressive Inline has two major things going for it: a huge trick list and imaginatively designed courses. You'll be amazed at the sheer number of tricks you can pull off, from aerial grabs and flips to the usual manuals, handplants, and grinds, to grabbing onto poles and moving vehicles. All the tricks are dead simple to execute but, as with all well-balanced trick systems, more skill is required to link together the big combos.

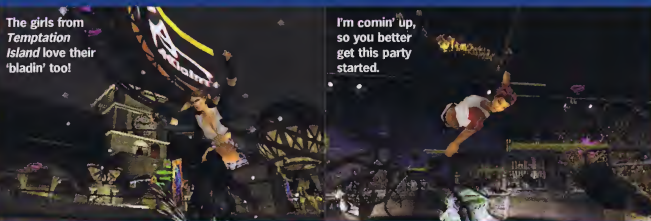
Plenty of creativity has been injected into the courses which, most importantly, feature plenty of good lines. Animation is smooth throughout (although there were some obvious clipping problems) and the game moves at a frenetic pace. While there are the usual indie tunes (from Reel Big Fish, The Vandals and P.O.D. to name a few) to skate to, sound effects for the onscreen action are noticeably limited.

As Z-Axis nears the 'polishing stage' of *Aggressive Inline*, it seems that what is already in place is an entertaining experience that's a fine reflection of the culture. □

ON TARGET? AGGRESSIVE INLINE

Whilst not without its flaws, *Aggressive Inline* comes closest to being the *Tony Hawk* of inline skating.

		
GRAPHICS Smooth animation and steady framerate but sub-standard texturing	SOUND Nice background music but little in the way of effects	GAMEPLAY Excellent trick system matched by equally first-rate courses



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WORDS: DEAN EVANS

COMMANDOS 2: MEN OF COURAGE

You'll be surprised what a commando can
do with just a knife and a packet of
cigarettes...

Publisher Eidos
Developer Pyro Studios
Players 1
Release TBA

The arrival of *Commandos 2* on PS2 proves that even the most complex of PC titles can be transferred lock, stock and explosive barrel onto Sony's keyboard-less console. *Deus Ex* shows this month that PS2 is not only capable of handling intricate gameplay and in-depth strategy, but that it can handle it with style. All a

developer needs to do is get the interface right and successfully translate the keyboard commands and hotkey shortcuts to the eight buttons and two analogue sticks on a Dual Shock pad.

Deus Ex gets it right. *Commandos 2* gets it right. The result is a war game that blends adventure, exploration and squad-level combat, with the promise of hour upon hour of engaging strategy, all of it in real-time. This is not a *Command & Conquer* clone, the sort of game where you forgo tactical thinking in favour of weight of numbers. Instead, it's all about planning and awareness, improvisation and stealth. Set during World War II, *Commandos 2* puts you in command of a small squad of soldiers, ordering you to complete seek-and-destroy, rescue and infiltration missions in locations right across the globe.

Everywhere you look, *Commandos 2* impresses. Rather than limit the featured environments to bits of France and Germany, the missions take you to a Pacific island, an Indian temple and onto the ice sheets of the Arctic. The levels are huge and are drawn in high resolution, isometric 3D. Like the PC version, you can pan around the level using the analogue stick, rotate the static viewpoint through four directions and zoom in/out with very little loss of detail. Rather than retaining the point-and-click control system, PS2's *Commandos 2* offers direct control over your troopers. In many ways it works better than the original.

Whether you are infiltrating a Japanese aircraft carrier or trying to break into Castle Colditz, success in *Commandos 2* relies on knowing what your men can and can't do. If a mission requires brute strength and silent stabbing then the Green Beret is perfect. Underwater work requires the skills of the Diver, while handling

OH WHAT A LONELY WAR

The missions in *Commandos 2* take you from a German submarine base to Japan and even up to the Arctic. You've got to be flexible.



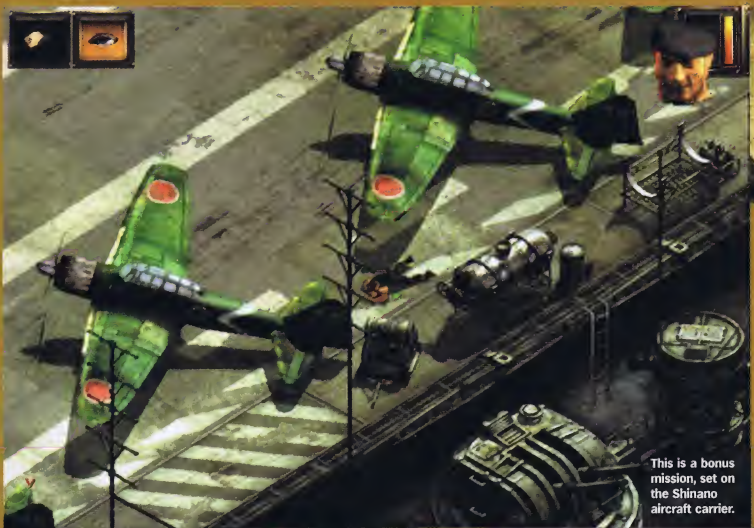
1. The opening level is a challenge in itself. Starting in a small boat outside the submarine base in La Rochelle (French coast), you must sneak the Thief inside without raising the alarm.



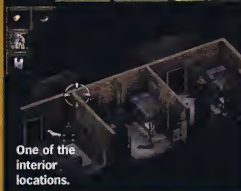
2. Once the second mission is complete, the third involves breaking out of the submarine, rescuing commandos, then sneaking aboard a German destroyer to free the sub's crew.



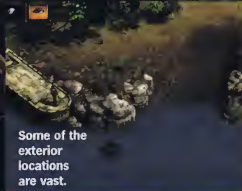
3. On to India. The commandos must sneak into a temple complex and rescue a spiritual leader, liberate a squad of Gurkhas, re-arm said Gurkhas and then escape. This one's tough.



This is a bonus mission, set on the Shinano aircraft carrier.



One of the interior locations.



Some of the exterior locations are vast.

explosives is for the trained Sapper only. Then there's the Driver (who can pilot or drive any vehicle), the Spy (who can disguise himself as the enemy), the Sniper (the finest sharpshooter the army has to offer) and the Thief (who can climb walls and pick locks). You must use the skills of each character in combination to complete the extensive missions.

The appeal of *Commandos 2* is not only its size and variety, but also its complexity. How do you break into a German submarine base using only the Thief? Can you really take out the soldiers in a Japanese garrison using just a knife and a packet of cigarettes? There are weapons to find, items to use and disguises to don. And while a stealthy approach is often best, there are moments when you can't avoid fighting. Use the Green Beret to lay down covering fire, bring in the Sapper to throw grenades or order the Driver to lob Molotov cocktails. If you lose just one of your soldiers, the mission is a failure.

Featuring ten extensive missions (plus hidden bonus sorties), utterly absorbing gameplay and an eye-widening attention to detail, *Commandos 2: Men Of Courage* is a massive prospect. The PC original was a huge hit and the game deserves to make a giant Impact on PS2.

ON TARGET? COMMANDOS 2: MEN OF COURAGE

So far, it looks as good and plays as well as the PC version. It also seems satisfyingly tough.



PLAYABILITY

The control system has been cleverly translated.



GRAPHICS

Enormous isometric landscapes that are superbly detailed.



DIFFICULTY

Make one wrong move and you're likely to be killed.



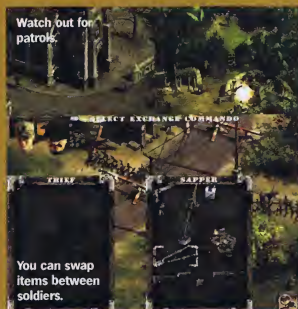
Stealth kills with the knife are oddly satisfying.



The blue line means you've been seen.



The famous bridge over the River Kwai.



Watch out for patrols.

THIEF EXCHANGER (COMMANDO)

THIEF SAPPER

You can swap items between soldiers.

BASIC TRAINING

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Recon

Nothing is more important in *Commandos 2* than reconnaissance. You need to spend time looking around, noting where the enemy is and then planning how to deal with them.

Intelligence

The enemy can be alerted to your presence in several ways. Not only can they see you (with MGS-style line of sight) but they can also hear you if you fail to move quietly enough.

Stealth

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UNCOVERING THE LATEST NEWS EVERY MONTH

SPY

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EDITED BY MAX EVERINGHAM

On the ground
or in the air,
there's always
a lot going on.



Expect to see a lot
of fire and
explosions.



Just like the set
of *Mad Max*.



A BREATH OF HOT AIR

Are you George or the dragon? In Kuju Entertainment's *Reign Of Fire* you can be both.

BAM! ENTERTAINMENT IS SET to release a videogame interpretation of the forthcoming Rob Bowman film *Reign Of Fire*. The game will give players the opportunity to play from two opposing perspectives: either as a human or as a dragon.

It's the year 2024 and highly evolved dragons have become the dominant species on the planet, with only a few humans remaining. Brave and valiant Englishman Quinn (played by Christian Bale) and his followers take refuge in a castle and battle for survival against their fiery foes. They soon encounter an American dragon-slayer, Denton Van Zan (Matthew McConaughey) who is planning to lead a dangerous crusade to London to fight off the scaly monsters.

Reign Of Fire, the game, is split into two different sections. Beginning on the human

side, players must first overcome confrontations with the dragons before unlocking the dragon side. While playing as a human, gamers will control a series of high-tech military vehicles including a mini buggy equipped with a machine gun turret, a jeep, a heavily armoured Abrams tank and a 4x4 fire truck used for specialist tasks. Players will also get a choice of three fighting forces to fight as: the US military, the Norfolk Militia and the Kentucky Irregulars, the latter of which, despite sounding like an American football team, are the most important group in the game. Led by Van Zan, they are a team of highly disciplined and experienced dragon slayers.

Dragon missions on the other hand will enable the player to experience the same battles from an entirely different perspective,

armed with napalm fireballs and flame breath, and driven by an instinct to survive and destroy. While playing as a dragon you'll have the ability to take to the skies and perform attacks from above. With this dual approach to the game, it's likely that *Reign Of Fire* will at least be a strongly original title.

As is the case with all games of film-licences, the success of the title is usually down to the quality of the film itself. In the case of the movie, to be released here around July, not enough has been seen to form any judgements, but with an interesting game angle and British-based Kuju Entertainment at the helm of development-duties, Bam! could be on to something special. **GW**

**Reign Of Fire, the game will be released in November 2002, through Acclaim.*

Killer buggy?
Players get to
drive all kinds
of military
hardware.



FINAL FANTASY XI BECOMES REALITY

Final Fantasy XI is out in Japan next month. Read on for new information.

THE LATEST INSTALLMENT of Final Fantasy is released in Japan on 16 May and will bring the world famous Square RPG online for the first time in its history.

Quite simply, FFXI welds the splendour of Final Fantasy X onto the vast scope and community gameplay of a Net adventure. In FFXI, player characters are defined by the traditional skill sets (strength, agility, charisma) and their appearance can be personalised (male, female, short, tall, brown hair, black hair and so on).

Characters select a job, much like an RPG 'class', following the path of a Warrior, a Monk, a Mage (Black, White or Red) or a Thief and benefiting from their abilities. Once online, you can talk to any other player character you meet (via word inputs, or a chat window if you have a USB keyboard) and form small parties to tackle quests – you can also make alliances to fight

larger battles against monstrous NPC forces. There are spells to learn, ranged weapons to wield and items to trade. There is, however, no nasty player killing in FFXI. Because the action unfolds in an online environment (the world of Vana'Diel) the game uses a semi real-time combat system. Based around familiar options (Attack, Magic, Use, etc) characters attack according to their speed and the weapon used. Alongside the core hack-'n'-slash, FFXI also features ranged weaponry and spell casting (fire, blizzard, sleep, cure, haste).

And there's more, including the overriding battle for the three Vana'Diel Kingdoms, the Tetra Master card game and weapon remodelling. We'll tell you much more when we've had hands-on experience. □ DE

*Find more news on FFXI in OPS2 when we can confirm an Australian release.



As a child, I used to dream of having my own chicken to ride.

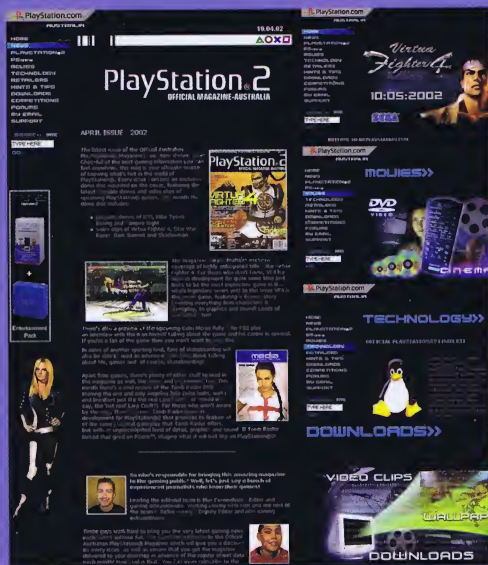
THE COST OF CHOCOBOS

How Japanese gamers will play FFXI. In Japan FFXI is being released as a two-disc package for ¥7800 (\$110) featuring the game CD and the PlayOnline software to manage the Internet connection. As it's an online-only game, FFXI requires the combo of a PS2 Hard Disc Drive/Network Adaptor. Most importantly, you'll have to pay to play. Square has recently revised its pricing structure and FFXI time now costs ¥1,280 per month per character (roughly \$18).



GET DOWN WITH PLAYSTATION.COM

OPS2 finds out what's happening on PlayStation's Official website...



PLAYSTATION.COM has been somewhat of an unknown quantity for most Australian PlayStation owners. Along with everything that you can find right here every single month in OPS2, au.playstation.com updates their PlayStation news. What's more, there's a great Forum section in place where you're able to talk about and compare notes on all of your favourite games and movies.

With the PS2 going on-line later this year, the official Australian site will be the main hub to go to and like all great things in life, it's set to improve with time. With all the goss, information and technical 'how-tos', product descriptions, release schedules, video clips and downloadable wallpapers, this site will be the central spot for everything that you'll be needing in the way of all things PlayStation. Along with game news, the movie section is also impressive, and offers reviews and critiques of most big cinema and DVD releases.

OPS2 is also about to launch its own section dedicated specifically to the magazine on the

site. When you need your fix of OPS2 between issues, then pop over here – and you'll get access to what our big stories will be and find out what will be on each of our new demo discs! You'll even be able to subscribe to the magazine online!

This month, be sure to check out a special feature on the new PS2 Linux Kit, as well as joining in on all the 'Linux' discussions that's happening on its own channel in the bulletin boards. This month also sees an extra-special Tekken 4 feature. It's packed with loads of information and new screenshots and looks like it's destined to be the mother of all beat 'em up games!

Get on over there and register for a great new (and free!) email address! When you register with the site, you'll be the happy new owner of an address that'll read yourname @ playstation.com.au! Cool huh? NK and RY

* Check out au.playstation.com now!

GO! GO! GO!

New F1 season, new game from EA Enter *F1 2002*.



JUST AS FERRARI has been using last year's car in the first races of the 2002 Formula 1 season (because it's still a good car!) EA is currently using last year's code for its new *F1 2002* (because it's still a good game). Why redesign something for the sake of it? The aim this time around is to improve the whole package and build on the strengths of last year's game. So all the good things that *F1 2001* had – fast frame rate, multiple race options, in-game challenges – *F1 2002* plans to do better.

Apart from the obvious team, driver and car updates for the new season, EA wants *F1 2002* to be a much more intense racing experience. With this in mind, the game will feature an array of new camera angles for key race moments, plus other TV-style cinematics, a themed front-end and full-length race replays. Most notably, the race engine now includes a new 'slingshot' bar – this charges up when you sit in the slipstream of the car in front to give you a boost to overtake it (complete with whooshing sound effect and suitably speed-blurred visuals).

The popular Challenges aspect of the game has also



been improved. Dubbed EA Sports Cards, each F1 team has six challenges and by beating them you unlock bonuses in the game. It'll be the only reason you'll ever drive for Arrows. Based around the chassis of *F1 2001*, *F1 2002* will certainly have the reliability. Let's hope it has the performance to match and manages to iron out some of the previous versions' minor flaws. **DE**

**F1 2002* will line up on the grid on 24 May.

A LEAGUE OF THEIR OWN

Codemasters announces the release of 15 different football games – all at once!

CODEMASTERS HAS SIGNED videogame rights deals with 15 of the biggest football clubs in Europe and will launch individual games for each. Fans of Arsenal, Aston Villa, Chelsea, Leeds United, Liverpool, Man United and Rangers plus a further eight European teams will be able to buy a club specific version of the core *Club Football* game. *OPS2* wants the Leeds United one!

Codemasters is most excited about the way its games will tap into what it describes "the soul of football" – or the tribal fanaticism of club supporters. Bound to attract the attention of hundreds of thousands of PS2 football fans whose clubs are not represented regardless, the development team at Codemasters is designing the game as what it claims to be

the, "most realistic, playable football action title brought to the market."

Although the central game will be identical in each of the 15 versions, elements like team line-ups, strips and stadia will be tailored to the particular headline team that appears on the box. A further added attraction will be the player's ability to include themselves as a digital footballer and play as part of the first-team. Simon Prytherch, head of the Codemasters Football Studio, explains further. "It's every fan's dream to train and play for their club. To come out of the tunnel and onto the hallowed turf, to see all the familiar players beside you with the roar of your club's supporters." The appeal is obvious.

Of utmost importance to a team-

focused game like *Club Football*, Codemasters is using an exclusive new photographic technique which should give the players an impressive photo-realistic appearance. The on-pitch gameplay puts gamers in control of a key player in each of the teams' squads in confrontations with rival clubs.

Although likely to provoke claims that *Club Football* is little more than a cynical marketing ploy, *OPS2* can't wait for the chance to play as our favourite clubs. Or at least that goes for most of us – the Editor's still reeling at the lack of a Northern Spirit team... Oh well, we're sure the Harry and Dukes-led Leeds will do! **GW**

* 15 Club Football games should be released here by the end of 2002.

CRACK DOWN

Codemasters kicks some first person shooter ass!

Apparently taking aim at all the boring, 'predictable' FPS titles out there, Codemasters is determined to revitalise the genre with its new action title *Shoot To Kill: Colombian Crackdown*.

But don't take our word for it, read what the man himself, Gavin Raeburn, Codemaster's Studio Head, has to say. "Game developers are complacent with first-person shooter games, relying on better graphics and broadband gameplay to spice up ageing dinosaurs," he says. "Message boards are full of criticism for over-hyped FPSs that simply don't take the genre any further. We intend to totally reinvent the clichéd first-person shooter, move it on, deliver a fresh gameplay experience and show gamers what they've been missing for years." That's fighting talk where *OPS2* comes from, but sadly there's little bite to back up Raeburn's bark as yet. The plot will weave a complex web of intrigue, betrayal and all those other Law and Order-type emotions that make such compulsive television viewing, but this time it's up to you to do something about it.

Sanctioned by a Republican-friendly shoot to kill policy, your agent will face what the Codies are describing as "revolutionary AI and physics systems" and it's this that the developer hopes will herald a new age for first person shooter titles. With the likes of *Medal of Honor: Frontline*, *Conflict Desert Storm*, *SOCOM: Navy Seals* and *Delta Force: Land Warrior* all making similarly gritty claims, we're not sure about the revolution, but we're ready to battle! **□**

**STK:CC* will be released around October.



This All-Star side took time out to pose for the *OPS2* cameras.

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Echoes of Ico?

LUCKY THIRTEEN

XIII and *Rayman 3: Hoodlum Havoc* revealed as Ubi Soft's flagship PS2 titles.

UBI SOFT HAS ANNOUNCED two of its major PS2 titles for 2002: A continuation of its multi-million selling *Rayman* series, entitled *Rayman 3: Hoodlum Havoc* and an intriguing cel shaded first-person shooter called *XIII*, based on the comic of the same name by Belgian author, Jean Van Hamme.

XIII

With cel shading now seemingly infusing every genre of game, Ubi Soft has seen it fit to introduce the cartoon effect to its forthcoming first-person shooter, *XIII*. The story behind the game will have a conspiracy theme and players will be required to unravel clues through flashback visuals.

Most exciting for FPS fans will be the news that *XIII* is powered by the next-generation Unreal II technology. This should ensure the game's textures will be smooth, AI is of the highest order and graphics fluidly animated even at high frame rates. *XIII* is in development by an internal team in Paris, to ensure Ubi Soft's promises of "finely balanced action and stealth" and "unheard of levels of interactivity and freedom" are fulfilled. Laurent Detoc, President of Ubi Soft, North America, explains his hopes for the game: "From the revolutionary cel shaded animation, Unreal II technology and unique story line, *XIII* reaches the limits of interactive gameplay."

Rayman 3: Hoodlum Havoc

Rayman 3 was first announced to the press via a series of teaser trailers posted on Ubi Soft's Web site. They showed strange creatures wearing cloaks and pointy hats, accompanied by the text "Search For The Enemy". One of these creatures is seen nailing a wanted poster to a tree and as he walks away we see that Rayman is the enemy they are searching for.

The trailer suggests that the new game will begin with our hero on the run from these Hoodlum characters. Ubi Soft has promised that *Rayman 3* will include an "innovative tactical arcade battle system" and take place in brand-new locations populated by "off-the-wall" characters. Interestingly, the concept seems to indicate a new direction for *Rayman*, moving away from his traditional platform-based gameplay. This is backed-up by *Rayman Creator*, Michel Ancel's comment that, "The extravagant imagination that has gone into the design of *Rayman 3* will not only appeal to our existing fan base but also attract new players." □ GW

"*Rayman 3: Hoodlum Havoc* and *XIII* are both scheduled for release this spring. For hands-on reports on these and other Ubi Soft titles, see *Spy* in next month's OPS2.



Off-the-wall characters indeed.

SO SOLID CREW

Keeping you updated on *Soul Calibur 2*'s development.

SOUL CALIBUR 2, NAMCO'S latest installment of what is widely regarded the best beat-'em-up ever, may be a while off an Australian release – but that doesn't stop us wanting to see how the game's coming along. Although these shots were taken from the 'still in development' arcade version that made its debut at the AOU arcade show in Japan, they show the quality of game we can expect to be playing on our PS2s later this year.

In a recent interview, Producer Hiroaki Yotoryama revealed that *Soul Calibur 2* was nearly 70 percent complete and would be ready for a full arcade release before the summer. Yotoryama-san also explained he didn't envisage any delay between the arcade and home release, and hopes the console version would be out in Japan before the end of the year.

What's most exciting for PS2 owners is that the arcade version of SC2 is being developed on the System 246 board, the central hub of the coin-op cabinet, which is based on the same chip set that's inside Sony's console. This means that the PS2 version should be virtually identical to the coin-op. In terms of new gameplay additions, an effect known as motion

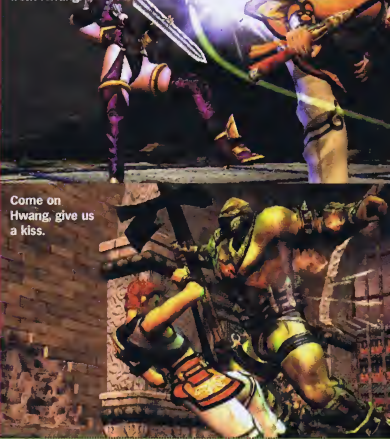
blending has been utilised, allowing some of the characters like Ivy and Nightmare's upper and lower body parts to move independently. This means Ivy can walk and spin her whip at the same time – giving her a far more aggressive look. Players are now able to move in eight directions while still guarding and, if struck down, will rise in four separate ways. Characters will also suffer additional damage if they take a blow and bounce off a wall, although they are able to recover from these hits instantly.

The character list is currently incomplete but OPS2 believes 12 will be covered from *Soul Calibur* and a further five will be added. Our Japanese correspondent playtested

the arcade version at the AOU show last month and there were two new characters already in place: Yunsung, who wields a Japanese broadsword, and Sophitia's sister, Cassandra.

OPS2 has learned that *Soul Calibur 2* should debut in 'Q4' this year, which can mean any time from October to December – but don't hold your breath! As soon as we can confirm more PS2-specific details, *Spy* will have news first. □ GW

Ivy defends a stinging blow from Hwang.



Come on Hwang, give us a kiss.



WRECKLESS

Wreckless on PS2 collision course

SOFTWARE DEVELOPERS everywhere are still scrambling to ride the PlayStation 2 wave. *Wreckless: The Yakuza Missions* has been widely regarded as one of the X Box's best games and it's now destined for a future on the PS2. Activision are gearing up to release the game in Australia around November of this year.

Larry Goldberg, Activision's Vice President said, "The insanely reckless, pulse-pounding fun that made *Wreckless: The Yakuza Missions* a success on the Xbox will take mission-based driving to new heights on the PlayStation 2. The game delivers an over-the-top action experience by allowing players to weave

through traffic, bust through barriers, crash into parked cars, break through plate glass windows and even race up an escalator in a local mall."

Wreckless is a mission-based driving game and is based around Hong Kong's underworld. Two storylines will be made available – allowing you to play as part of an elite task force or as a government agent and gamers can expect 20 playable missions and 20 sub-missions. 25 vehicles will be available and the game is free-roaming and the city traffic should prove to be particularly impressive and realistic. □ RY

*Follow *Wreckless*' path in OPS2!

BLUE LINES

» *Ecks Vs Sever*, the forthcoming Franchise Pictures film starring Lucy Liu and Antonio Banderas is being made into a PS2 game. The first-person shooter is being developed by Zombie Studios » In Japan a sake-induced *Dead Or Alive 2* voice actor was heard to whisper that Tecmo is in the process of making another PS2 game in the series »

Free Radical Design is currently discussing the possibility of making *TimeSplitters 2* online compatible. Its progress is dependant on getting the cash for the servers, though

BLOCKBUSTER

You too can be Tom Cruise. You lucky dog.

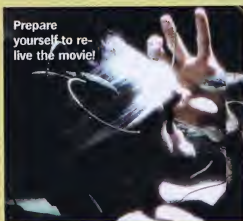
ONE OF THE YEAR'S biggest sci-fi movies is now set to have a PS2 game based around it! Minority Report is Steven Spielberg's latest flick and in true Hollywood style, is a star-studded affair. The movie will see Tom Cruise in the lead, and has been written by none other than Philip K. Dick, the man behind *Blade Runner* and *Total Recall*.

Activision reckons that the game will closely resemble the characters and the events of the movie, and with the graphical grunt of the PS2, OPS2 is hoping for a strongly cinematic and involving experience.

Activision's Chief Operating Officer Ron Doornik said, "Minority Report lends itself well to a wide variety of gameplay elements with intense futuristic storylines and gripping action-packed sequences. We are very excited

to work with Steven Spielberg, Fox Interactive, and DreamWorks Pictures on what is expected to be one of the most anticipated films of 2002." □ RY

"The movie is slated for a July release and gamers can expect the game by September. Get your calendars out!



Prepare yourself to re-live the movie!



Pac-Man will have to deal with more than just munching dots.

The fruit can run, but it can't hide from our hero.

PAC-MAN! MY NAME IS SUE AND I AM USUALLY HERE RUNNING THE ARCADE.

PAC'S BACK

Pac-Man chomps his way into the 21st Century in *Pac-Man World 2*.

ONE OF THE most iconic videogame characters of all time will make his appearance on PS2 this summer when SCE releases 3D platformer *Pac-Man World 2*. The game has been developed by arcade game pioneers Namco and was released in the United States earlier this year.

Older gamers amongst you will probably have fond memories of the *Pac-Man* series, which started way back in 1981. The yellow dot muncher fast became one of the most successful videogame characters of all time. That year alone, 250 million games of *Pac-Man* were played every week on 100,000 arcade cabinets!

So what's changed in the 22 years since? What place is there for *Pac-Man* on the home of next-gen entertainment? Well, fans new and old will be happy to hear the basic concept is still the same: Guide *Pac-Man* around munching dots and fruits in the fastest possible time while avoiding armies of ghosts. Only this time, it's in 3D and spread across seven major world themes that include Lava, Ocean, Ghost Island and Tree Tops.

Pac-Man World 2 retains a simplistic but sufficient story

given the nature of the platforming gameplay – the magic tree which provides fruit to keep the *Pac-Man* Village prosperous is ransacked by a group of ghosts. Spooky, their leader, lets rip with an almighty cackle and his evil compatriots attempt to hide all of the fruit from the *Pac-People*, rendering them helpless. *Pac-Man* is quite rightly given the almighty task of saving the whole of *Pac-Land* by collecting the hidden fruit.

The 3D dynamic has allowed Namco to increase *Pac-Man*'s roster of abilities. He can hang off ledges, he can do a Sonic-inspired spinning dash and he can also swim under water. At certain points in the game he's able to ice skate, in-line skate and swim with the aid of flippers.

With a self-referential nod to its roots, Namco has included the original games as unlockable extras. By collecting enough tokens, players are able to return to *Pac-Village*'s arcade and play *Pac-Man*, *Pac-Attack*, *Ms Pac-Man* and *Pac-Mania*.

Pac-Man World promises to bring a whole new generation of gamers round to its addictive charms. It will, no doubt, raise the pulses of a few nostalgic retro freaks, too. **GW**

RETRO-A-GO-GO! And you thought Ambassadors Of Funk's *Super Mario World* was bad...

It'll take the most die-hard of videogames historians to remember the one-hit wonder success of Columbia recording artists Buckner & Garcia's song *Pac-Man Fever*. The song hit a chord with the arcade rats of the time in its lyrical depiction of a *Pac-Man* player taking a trip to the local mall to play his favourite game. Not surprisingly, the song received considerable airplay on US radio in 1982. The duo followed the single with an album entitled *Pac-Man Fever*. Their two subsequent singles, *Do The Donkey Kong* and *The Defender* were indescribably poor.

*Visit www.bucknergarcia.com to hear samples of their work.



This is your
ride, the
Vendetta.

JURASSIC LARK

CAPCOM HAVE JUST announced details on *Dino Stalker*, their brand-new shoot 'em up, to be released in December. *Dino Stalker* will be played from a first-person perspective and is compatible with the Namco G-Con 2.

This new project is being regarded as the latest from the *Dino Crisis* family, although programmers and scriptwriters from both *Resident Evil* and *Onimusha: Warlords* have been used in the development process. It's said that *Dino Stalker* is completely free roaming, setting it apart from the 'rail' system used in other shooters like *Time Crisis* and more recently, *Vampire Night*.

Plenty of locations will be available, but there are multiple weapons and over a dozen enemy types to dispose. It is the story and script that should set *Dino Stalker* apart from other shooters, and *OPS2* hopes they are able to overcome the tedious nature that other games of this genre seem to suffer. **RY**
**Dino Stalker* will be Capcom's first FPS.

HELI OR HIGH WATER

Go out in a blaze of glory with Kuju Entertainment's *Fireblade*.

MIDWAY HAS RELEASED further information on its exciting new helicopter combat game, *Fireblade*. One of the most interesting elements of the Kuju Entertainment-developed title will be the player's ability to choose from two different approaches to the game: stealth or all-out combat.

"This showed up as a really big plus in our testing," explains Mark Washbrook, Executive Producer of the title. "The people who wanted to dive right in and enjoy balls-out, in-your-face action were whooping with joy, while the people who wanted to creep around and snipe the heads off the infantry could enter Stealth mode, sneak round the edges of the patrols and take their grisly pleasure." During Stealth mode, players will fly with the aid of a thermal imaging camera which is detailed enough to show dead soldiers' bodies changing from red to blue as the heat fades from their corpses. A clever, if slightly morbid effect.

Although *Fireblade* joins Eidos' *Thunderhawk: Operation Phoenix* as one of just two arcade helicopter combat games on PS2, Washbrook claims his title's closest comparison would be EA's *Strike* series on PSone in terms of exciting missions, accessible gameplay and explosive weaponry. There's certainly no shortage of firepower in *Fireblade*, with a Sniper Cannon, Swarm Missiles, a Rail Gun and a Laser-Guided Homing Missile.

Fireblade not only gives players the freedom to choose how

to complete missions but also two types of chopper: the Vendetta attack helicopter and the Talon troop carrier. "The Vendetta has an augmented Jet system to provide Turbo speeds comparable to that of a jet. The slower Talon is used for missions in which the player works cooperatively with ground forces to complete mission objectives," explains Washbrook. This should hopefully add a degree of variation to the gameplay.

The game's 18 missions will take place over a series of diverse landscapes from the snowy peaks of the Swiss Alps to the arid heat of the Middle East oil fields. Washbrook is confident these environments will be of the highest visual quality. "A large part of the project's development cycle was spent working, reworking and refining the terrain until we had a realistic environment. One of the most notable differences is the sheer quantity of objects in the game. We don't just have a handful of vehicles, buildings and soldiers - there are hundreds of them."

Although *Fireblade* is still a long way down the release schedule for 2002, *OPS2*'s exclusive screens show just how impressive the game is looking even at this early stage. Look out for a hands-on preview in the coming months. **GW**

**Fireblade* is released this autumn through Midway Games.

Forgoing the
stealth option
for a bit of a
fireworks
display.

Blowing stuff
up will be a
large part of
the game.

BLUE LINES

» Infogrames will release *Transworld Surf* for PS2. The game is being developed by *Smuggler's Run* veterans, Angel Studios » Capcom has announced *Red Dead Revolver*, a spaghetti Western-themed third-person adventure » EA Sports BIG has revealed exciting new plans for a downhill mountain biking title. Far from being an *SSX*-like the game will take the shape of an adventure game where players ride around huge environments performing various tasks with the aid of their bikes. It's being touted as *Jak And Daxter* on two wheels...

E3

The greatest show on earth!

E3 HAS ROLLED AROUND AGAIN and is now just around the corner! The famous Electronic Entertainment Expo will again be held in Los Angeles, USA, between May 23-25 and, of course, you can rely on *OPS2* to be there! The 2002 event is set to be the biggest in history. Not only will all of the big games be unveiled as usual (could we be seeing *Grand Theft Auto 4*!), but you can also expect major announcements to be made concerning the PS2's online capabilities and potential future price drops in Australia. **RY**
*Read all of *OPS2*'s in-depth E3 report in the July Issue, out June 19.

SPY in Japan

30

DAYS IN TOKYO

Edited by Amos Wong

DAY 1 (19 FEBRUARY)

My friends go on a shopping spree to buy *Final Fantasy* and anime figures. Head back to my place for drinks and explain to them how to use one of the most feared contraptions faced by a foreigner here: a traditional Japanese loo. It's a matter of adapting.

DAY 3

Interview Ico's Director Fumito Ueda. Open and friendly, he shows me the original opening for the game plus various sequences from its development. Afterwards I have a peek around the office. Sleeping bags hanging from cubicle walls and a sizable collection of empty coffee cans on Ueda's desk hint at the working hours involved.

DAY 4

Check out the AOU Arcade Show. Have to drag myself away from *Soul Calibur 2* to try some of the other games around.

DAY 5

Friends head back to Sydney, but one of them has overshopped big time so I end up carrying a hefty Godzilla 2000 figure on the train back home. Get more than a few strange looks.

DAY 15

Onimusha 2 hits the stores and in one week the game shifts over 644,000 units.

DAY 17

Go to the Yusaku Matsuda Exhibition in Shibuya. Memorabilia on display includes prints, photo albums and posters. A timeline stretching the walls chronicles his acting and musical career and you can listen to samples of the latter via headphones. A funky decorated area displays artwork dedicated to the legend. Needless to say due to the late actor's likeness being used for the game, *Onimusha 2* is on show and playable.

DAY 23

The cherry blossoms are blooming

Mesmerising, but kind of looks like meringues.



CG CARNIVAL

PlayStation 2 developers spotlighted at digital arts exhibition.

THE AGENCY FOR Cultural Affairs' Media Arts Festival is an annual event that showcases outstanding works in digital art, games, animation and manga. The Grand Prize in the non-interactive category was awarded to *Aniyo*, a beautifully abstract CG film by Namco artist Yasuo Ohba. Set to a simple piano accompaniment, a material-like form composed of millions of tiny filaments gently undulated and morphed into a multitude of organic shapes, mesmerising its audience. The short was awarded for simplicity and freshness among works that strived to mimic reality.

CG realism was also recognised: Hironobu Sakaguchi won a Special Prize for *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within*'s achievement in technology. *FFX*, *Silent Hill 2* and *Armored Core: Another Age* were nominated for the CG Moving Pictures award. In total, 13 software titles were put up for awards at the Festival, ten of which were PS2 exclusive. Japanese anime,

Final Fantasy: Unlimited made the Animation Award shortlist.

Winning the Grand Prize in the interactive category was *Protrude, Flow*. This work captured claps and yells from viewers and translated them into sound levels which caused black magnetic fluid to rise, fall and form random spiky shapes.

The most innovative and exciting display came from *Contact Water*. Here, once four participants had donned VR goggles and hand sensors, a pool of water materialised on their palms, in which marine animals including dolphins and manta rays swam. At a flick of the wrist, the creatures jumped from one person's hand to another with a splash. Other palm movements triggered different responses like whistles and squeaks. ☐ **AW**

'This all has implications for future gaming; Spy will be the first to report developments.

JAPANESE TOP 10

1. **ONIMUSHA 2** (Capcom)
2. **SEGA TSUKU 2002 J.LEAGUE PRO SOCCER** (Sega)
3. **XENOSAGA EPISODE 1: WILLE ZUR MACHT** (Namco)
4. **ITADAKI STREET 3** (Enix)
5. **EX JINSEI GAME** (Takara)
6. **SAGOKUSHI SENKI** (KOEI)
7. **SAMURAI** (Spike)
8. **ORE GA KANTOKU DA! VOL. 2** (Enix)
9. **VIRTUA FIGHTER 4** (Sega)
10. **FINAL FANTASY X INTERNATIONAL** (Square)

* Chart source: Dengeki 4-10 March.

BIG CRISIS! ZETTAI ZETSUMEI TOSHI

A major earthquake has sent a bustling city (situated atop a man-made island off the Tokyo coast) into chaos. As survivor Masayuki Sudo, players must find their way through the wreckage and make it back to the mainland, amidst the constant threat of aftershocks. This is a survival adventure without the horror. Survival necessities, becomes paramount. It's a great premise – let's hope it delivers. ☐ **AW**



Incredible Crisis meets City Crisis in Zettai Zetsumei Toshi.

ANIME PINBALL? AKIRA: PSYCHO BALL

Inspired by an actual pinball machine that's based on the popular Japanese anime *Akira*, *Psycho Ball*'s playing fields are split into upper and lower sections and recombine in various configurations based on scenes from the movie. Targets yield Pass Keys which open chutes that lead to the next 'level'. Shoot the ball into the right spot and the table opens to reveal a lower section. Surely such a landmark anime deserves a more epic scale game? ☐ **AW**



Infogrames will release *Psycho Ball*, PS2's first pinball game, in June.



CIRCUS MAXIMUS

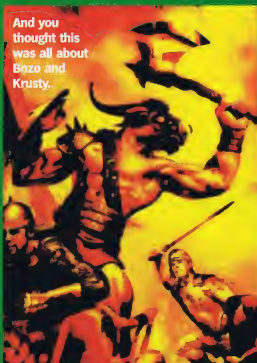
Another of Xbox's games looks for life on the PlayStation 2

CIRCUS MAXIMUS is aiming to be a racer with a difference by combining it with classic elements of chariot racing and gladiator fighting. In a similar fashion with the recently released *Star Wars Racer Revenge*, *Circus Maximus: Chariot Wars* will be a balance of not only winning races, but being resilient enough to even survive them!

Some details are yet to be released, but OPS2 has managed to uncover some of the features that will be included in the game. Expect to race with two-man teams, a four-player mode, 19 tracks, warriors and horse and chariot combinations. Upgrades and power-ups have also been thrown into the mix and kart-style antics have been incorporated into the strategies. ☐ **RY**

*OPS2 will have a hands-on preview of *Circus of Maximus* in an issue soon.

And you thought this was all about Bozo and Krusty.



BLUE LINES

» Although still highly top secret, we have heard unconfirmed rumours that SCEA's first official online title is called *Hardware*, a kind of simplified multiplayer version of *Dropship* – and it could be out before the end of the year! » Meanwhile at the US Game Developers' Conference, SCEA debuted *Twisted Metal: Online* » *Ape Escape 2* will feature ten times more monkeys than the PSone game including: rave dancing monkey, monkey with laser gun and monkey disguised as the Statue Of Liberty. How we laughed. And laughed



Didn't have a chance with your night goggles.



You get plenty of in-mission direction.

FREE XBOXER'S BROTHER

LONE WOLF

You're in enemy territory and you're on your own.

IT'S NOT CALLED Lone Wolf for nothing – in this PSone sequel to *Rainbow Six* you're not a wolf but you are very, very alone. Named after the *Rogue Spear* game mode that pits you against the bad guys on your lonesome, the player settles into the skin of one Ding Chavez (probably the best all-round soldier from *Rainbow Six*), and is tasked with carrying out their deadly missions totally solo. With no team to back you up, the challenge is significantly intensified as your first mission – to rendezvous with a dangerous terrorist-turned-informant in Norway – kicks off and

you're up against greatly enhanced enemy AI who can now take the initiative to track targets down (that's you), call for backup and react to the sight of fallen comrades. There are five missions in the game, eight new authentic weapons to add to the already impressive *Rainbow Six* arsenal and the graphics are better than ever. Sound will play a bigger part now too, with positional audio allowing players to pinpoint enemy activity and, developer Rebellion claims, the control scheme has been simplified to make it easy to jump right on in. And kill people. *Rainbow Six: Lone Wolf* should be out in July. ☐ **ME**

Our mate Amos gives Amlux a quick go in Japan.



BRAND TURISMO

Kazunori Yamauchi dedicates a special *Gran Turismo* game to car manufacturer, Toyota.

GRAN TURISMO: AMLUX is on playable display in Tokyo at one of Toyota's massive car showrooms, but before fans get excited, this special version won't be on sale in the shops. Appearing there in person recently, Yamauchi-san cited the company as being one of only three or four car manufacturers that were immediately supportive of the series and this special edition of *GT* is Polyphony Digital's expression of gratitude to the car company.

The 'Gran Turismo Corner' comprised four PS2 units that utilised the Sparco Cockpit. Two were set up for an I-Link battle on the Tokyo R246 track and the other pair for single-player games on which five courses and their mirror images were selectable. Races were relayed live on a massive video screen in the building's central atrium so that all visitors to the showroom could watch the action.

While similar to the *GT Concept* demo at the Tokyo Motor Show, Amlux's vehicle lineup consisted, unsurprisingly, exclusively of Toyotas and was split into four categories: Concept (2 cars), Normal (14 cars), Dream (1 car) and Race (7 cars). Standing out amongst them was a new rally version of the concept Rugged Sports Coupé, complete with the familiar green and red Castrol decals and trim. Afterwards, punters could sit behind the wheel of some of the car's real-life counterparts and try to resist the temptation to buy one. ☐ **AW**





PSone Top 10

RANK	TITLE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER
01	HARRY POTTER	ADVENTURE	EA
02	PETER PAN	ADVENTURE	SONY
03	TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3	SPORTS	ACTIVISION
04	MONSTERS INC	ADVENTURE	DISNEY
05	WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE?	FAMILY	EIDOS
06	FIFA 2002	SPORTS	EA
07	TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2	SPORTS	ACTIVISION
08	SYMPHON FILTER 3	ADVENTURE	989/SONY
09	WWF SMACKDOWN! 2	SPORTS	THQ
10	ET: THE EXTRA TERRESTRIAL	ADVENTURE	VIVENDI

PS2 Top 10

RANK	TITLE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER
01	GRAND THEFT AUTO 3	ADVENTURE	TAKE 2
02	METAL GEAR SOLID 2	ADVENTURE	KONAMI
03	2002 FIFA WORLD CUP	SPORTS	EA
04	DYNASTY WARRIORS 2	ACTION	THQ
05	WWF SMACKDOWN!	SPORTS	THQ
06	CRASH BANDICOOT 5	ADVENTURE	UNIVERSAL
07	WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP	DRIVING	SCEE
08	TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3	SPORTS	ACTIVISION
09	MAX PAYNE	ACTION	TAKE 2
10	ACE COMBAT DISTANT THUNDER	SIMULATOR	SCEE

PSone RELEASE SCHEDULE

JUNE TITLE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER
Spec Ops: Airborne	Action	TAKE 2
JULY TITLE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER
Serious Sam	Shooter	TAKE 2
Dancing Stage	Dancing	KONAMI
Nicktoons Racing	Racing	INFOGRAMES
Backyard Soccer	Sports	INFOGRAMES
Pajama Sam	Edutainment	INFOGRAMES
SEPTEMBER TITLE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER
Celebrity Deathmatch	Action	TAKE 2

PS2 RELEASE SCHEDULE

JUNE TITLE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER
David Beckham Soccer	Sports	ACTIVISION
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2	Extreme	ACTIVISION
Open Kart	Racing	RED ANT
Taz Wanted	Action	OZISOFT
Jimmy White's Cueball World	Sports	OZISOFT
Conflict: Desert Storm	Shooter	OZISOFT
V8 Supercars	Racing	OZISOFT
Prisoner Of War	Adventure	OZISOFT
V Rally 3	Racing	OZISOFT
Spec Ops 2	Action	TAKE 2
4 x 4 Evolution 2	Racing	TAKE 2
Austin Powers	Adventure	TAKE 2

PS2 RELEASE SCHEDULE CONT.

Jimmy Neutron Boy Genius	Arcade	THQ
Gitaroo Man	Dance Sim	THQ
Onimusha [Platinum]	Action	THQ
Resident Evil: Code Veronica X	Action	THQ
Circus Maximus: Chariot Wars	Racing	THQ
Scooby-Doo & the Night of 100 Frights	Action	THQ
Tetris Worlds	Puzzle	THQ
Smash Court Tennis	Sports	SONY
Frequency	Music	SONY
FreeStyle	Sports	EA Big
Antz Extreme Racing	Racing	EMPIRE

JULY

TITLE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER
Serious Sam	Shooter	TAKE 2
Black Dahlia	Adventure	TAKE 2
MX 2003: Superfly	Extreme	THQ
Pacman World	Arcade	SONY

AUGUST

TITLE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER
Tenchu 3	Action	ACTIVISION
Simpsons Skateboarding	Arcade	EA

SEPTEMBER

TITLE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER
Celebrity Deathmatch	Action	TAKE 2
Iron Storm	Action	TAKE 2
The Curse	Adventure	TAKE 2
Transworld Surfing	Extreme	OZISOFT
Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	Extreme	ACTIVISION
Race of Champions	Racing	ACTIVISION
X-Men Next Dimension	Action	ACTIVISION
Street Hoops	Sports	ACTIVISION
NHL 2003	Sports	EA
SHOX	Sports	EA
Rally 2002	Racing	EA
Gladiator Wrestling	Sports	EA
Need for Speed: Hot Pursuit 2	Racing	EA
Conflict Desert Storm	Shooter	SCI
Stuntman	Driving	ATARI

OCTOBER

Terminator	Action	INFOGRAMES
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NOVEMBER

The Getaway	Action	OZISOFT
Delta Force: Land Warrior	Action	NOVA
NBA Live 2003	Sports	EA
Harry Potter: Chamber of Secrets	Action	EA
Lord of the Rings	Adventure	EA
Allens: Colonial Marines	Action	FOX
Dragon Ball Z Fighters	Action	INFOGRAMES
The Thing	Action	UNIVERSAL
Scorpion King	Action	UNIVERSAL
Spyro The Dragon	Platform	UNIVERSAL
Jurassic Park Evolution	Action	UNIVERSAL
Total Immersion Racing	Racing	EMPIRE
Ghost Master	Action	EMPIRE

QUARTER 03

Star Wars: Bounty Hunter	Action	EA
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QUARTER 04

Spyro: Enter the Dragonfly	Platform	VIVENDI UNIVERSAL
Soul Calibur 2	Beat 'em up	NAMCO
Ape Escape 2	Platform	SONY
TimeSplitters 2	FPS	EIDOS



PlayStation 2



PlayStation 2



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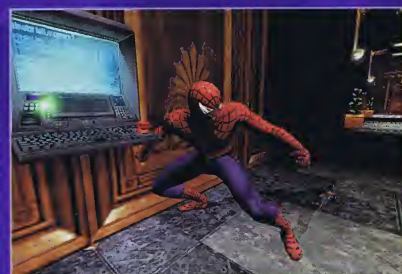
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WORDS: PAUL FITZPATRICK/PHOTOGRAPHY: MARTIN BURTON

HIDEO KOJIMA

Metal Gear Creator Hideo Kojima is rapidly becoming as well known as his games. We caught up with him at the launch of *Metal Gear Solid 2* in London and found him in a chatty mood.

Curriculum Vitae

Name: Hideo Kojima
Job title: Director and creator of MGS series
Nationality: Japanese
Date of birth: 24/6/63
Place of birth: Setagaya, Tokyo
Gameography:
1987: *Metal Gear* (MSX)
1988: *Snatcher* (PC88, MSX)
1990: *Metal Gear 2: Solid Snake* (MSX)
1992: *Snatcher* (PC)
1994: *Policecunts* (PC)
1995: *Policecunts* (3DO, PSone, Saturn)
1997: *Tokimeki Memorial Drama Series #1: Niji-Iro Na Selsuun* (PSone, Saturn)
1998: *Tokimeki Memorial Drama Series #2: Irodori No Love Song* (PSone, Saturn)
1998: *Metal Gear Solid* (PSone)
1999: *Metal Gear Solid: Special Missions* (PSone)
2000: *Metal Gear Solid (Game Boy Color)*
2001: *Zane Of The Enders* (PS2)
2002: *Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons Of Liberty* (PS2)
Hobbies: Cinema, reading, listening to music
Favourite film directors: Luc Besson, Jean Cocteau, Krzysztof Kieslowski, David Lynch, Danny Boyle, James Cameron, John Carpenter, Jan Koumen, Dario Argento, George A Romero, Sam Raimi
Favourite authors: Michael Crichton, Robert R McCammon, Bob Langley, Robin Cook, David Mason, Paul Gallico, Teru Miyamoto, Koba Abe
Favourite bands: Joy Division, New Order, Ultravox, The Sisters Of Mercy, The Cure, Nick Cave And The Bad Seeds, Depeche Mode



When current affairs periodical Newsweek described Hideo Kojima as one of the "ten important people to watch in the coming year and beyond"

its appraisal of the man who invented the videogame stealth-'em-up was greeted with little surprise by gamers the world over. In an industry not exactly known for famous faces, the creative force behind the *Metal Gear* series has become a genuine celebrity. With MGS2's UK launch weekend bringing in the kind of revenue normally associated with films like *Monsters, Inc* the time was ripe for OPS2 to interrogate afresh the man to whom a whole industry looks for inspiration.

What are your feelings looking back on MGS2's development process?

The feeling I do not have is, "Oh, I'm done. I'm tired." I do not have that feeling at all. I'm filled with a sense of accomplishment. There are things I look back on and say, "I could have done this differently." And there's a sense of relief where all the pressure of finishing the game is gone. What I'm thinking of now is what I should do next. After I finished MGS2 I said to myself, "What direction should I be heading in?" That's the strongest feeling I have right now.

Have you been surprised at all by any particular criticism of the game?

[Laughs] Not really, no. I guess I didn't expect people to hate Raiden this much.

Do you think that MGS2 could be the last time you'll be able to play as Snake? Has he become too big a character for gamers to identify with as a playable character?

A Bond film is not a Bond film without 007 himself. *Metal Gear* will always have Solid Snake, but I'll have to think about how to introduce him in different ways. If we keep allowing the player to use Solid Snake and have him face a stronger enemy in sequels to come, then the series goes nowhere. But Snake is always going to be in there in one form or another.

MGS2 unfolds with an emotional force. Is eliciting a strong emotional response essential to you?

Unlike films, games are interactive, making it easier to affect someone emotionally. They are more powerful tools because of this interactivity. I do not want my games to be simple toys – people

spend a lot of time playing with my games and I want them to have access to something that will influence them emotionally or intellectually.

Do you envisage directing the next MGS game or is it a series that could eventually evolve without your direct involvement?

What I'm doing now is trying to allocate my resources to different kinds of projects. I always want to keep one game where I do everything hands-on, just like I did with *Metal Gear Solid 1* and 2 where I'm the director, the producer, the writer, the game planner, the designer, everything. I always want one title where I'm in full control simply because it's fun to do. At the same time I'd like to work on other projects where I might be the producer only or I might be the

"A Bond film is not a Bond film without 007 himself. Metal Gear will always have Solid Snake"

producer and the game designer. It's just a matter of how much of myself I allocate to different projects.

How do you feel about the idea that people may end up referencing your games in the same way you reference cinema, literature and so on?

I have positive feelings about someone making references to MGS in their work, depending on how they refer to the game, of course. In the same way that I've been influenced by a lot of the things I've seen, if *Metal Gear Solid* influences people in their growing stage and is reflected in their work, and in return their work influences other people, it would be great.

What do you think of the prospects of the MGS series as the PS2 goes online?

With MGS 1 and 2 you're given a closed arena. You play along with the characters to a set story – that's one thing we'll probably still be doing in the future. But at the same time, if I was to come up with an online *Metal Gear*,

instead of playing along to a set story with limitations of the setting and programme, you could have an interactive experience with other players. Instead of having the game develop along with the story, the game would develop along with the characters. It would be fun to pursue both the traditional story model and the online model.

Assuming there will be a live action version of Metal Gear made at some point, who, out of the current crop of actors, would you like to see playing Snake?

Russell Crowe and Hugh Jackman would make good Solid Snakes.

What developments would you like to see in console technology over the next few years, to allow you to expand your videogame vision?

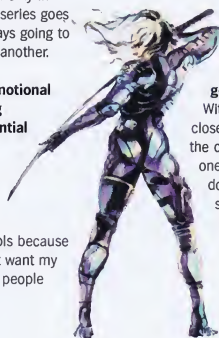
What I'm going to say next is not going to happen in the next two or three years, but maybe within the next ten or twenty. What we see on the monitor created by digital images, well, we know that it's fake. And since you know it's fake, you're not going to be wholly satisfied, no matter how great it looks. We'll probably try to introduce elements which are tangible and real that will be linked to software that allows them to react with each other. Maybe you'd wear goggles and through these you'd see everything in a room along with the CGI and CG characters. So half of the stuff you see is real, and half is fake. This blend would be very interesting. Plus I've always said a machine that could sense smell would be neat!

Does success remove or create obstacles?

One obstacle is time allocation. Now that the games already released are successful, I've been given a managerial position. I'd prefer to think about games 24 hours a day but I can't. I have to overlook different development lines and think of promotional plans as well as working on new games. One good thing about success is that I can go up to people and say, "Hi, I'm Hideo Kojima, creator of *Metal Gear Solid*," and this makes it really easy to meet new people. It's opened many doors to me.

Have you seen any locations in London that you might like to see a Metal Gear striding through in the future?

I haven't had the chance to walk around yet but what I want to do is hop on a double-decker bus and sit at the very front of the upper level, just like a kid! □



They have lady-boys in Japan too, y'know.



Hideo Kojima wonders whether Crowe or Jackman should play Snake on screen.

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WHATEVER HAPPENED TO *THE GETAWAY*? *OPS2* COLLARS THE AWOL CRIM SIM!

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MOH: Frontline



Max Payne
Walkthrough



Spider-Man



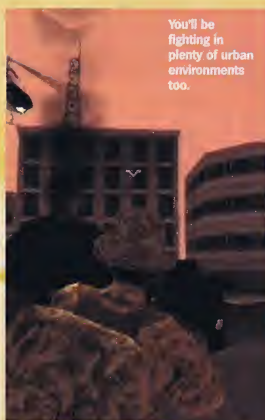
The Getaway



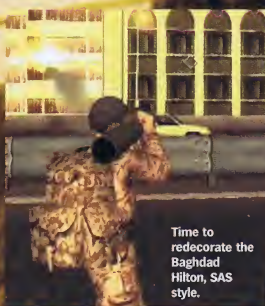
CONFLICT: DESERT STORM



Let's stick a missile down there just in case.



You'll be fighting in plenty of urban environments too.

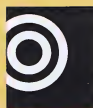


Time to redecorate the Baghdad Hilton, SAS style.

"Ooh, hang on, I've got a bit of grit in my eye. Anyone got the eyewash?"



Now this is what most people want when they think of army men...



It's a tense moment by anyone's standards. You're creeping with murderous intent towards an oblivious but well-armed sentry

guard scrutinising a ragged, pock-marked desert landscape. Knife drawn, blade sparking in the baking sun, the idea is to dispatch the unsuspecting conscript as quietly as possible before the dust bunnies hit the fan. Four feet... so far so good. Three feet... the sentry shuffles a bit, but it's too late to turn back. Two feet... almost th... Which is just about the moment where Murphy's Law comes into play and combat boot comes into contact with a twig/sun-dried gecko. Snap! Around spins the guard with rifle raised to his shoulder, safety catch off and it looks like you may be flunking 'staying alive in the special forces 101'.

Sure enough, a shot rings out, but it's the sentry who falls to the ground. Within seconds three SAS comrades are on the spot, one of whom is totting a recently unloaded sniper rifle. Saved! And all without a single command from you. Now, whereas such intuitive, ass-saving gestures may be two a penny in the real armed forces, in the exploits of their videogame counterparts, such independent action has been rarer than sequined fatigues. Until now, that is. Welcome to the world of *Conflict: Desert Storm*. A squad-based combat game that promises advanced AI to die for. In a manner of speaking. Here's

how the tour of duty began...

Despite what you may have read or heard, 1991's Gulf War (which, let's face it, played out like a videogame on the news bulletins) didn't end with the liberation of Kuwait. The truth is that it's been raging again for some time now on development kits dotting the open-plan splendour of Pivotal Games' not so secret headquarters. OPS2's mission? To once more [see preview issue 02] infiltrate said offices, perched on a wind-whipped hill overlooking the wintry Pom city of Bath, and gather intelligence on the first PS2 title by the developer which, in its earlier incarnation as Pumpkin Studios, was responsible for the much loved and highly respected real-time strategy title *Warzone 2100*.

The pre-mission briefing reveals the following details about *Conflict: Desert Storm*. Plumping for the notoriously tricky to pull off team-based gameplay template, this third-person, action strategy game will have players controlling a quartet of special forces soldiers (either US Delta Force or British SAS) as they shoved a khaki spanner in the Iraqi war machine's works. Through impressively implemented AI, the game aims to put you in command of a fully functioning team of specialists in a way that encourages tactical gameplay without sacrificing action to the military equivalent of sheep herding a bunch of non-playable numbskulls. Using pistols through rocket propelled grenades to

WORDS: PAUL FITZPATRICK/PHOTOGRAPHY: RICK BUETTNER

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Previewed last issue, we can't shake our curiosity in the A.I. paradigm shift Pivotal Games is promising for its Gulf War game. OPS2 grabbed its kit bag and headed out on another reconnaissance mission.



CONFLICT: DESERT STORM

fixed gun emplacements, on foot and in a tank, your soldiers will be a pretty resourceful bunch. That's the general idea, anyway.

So much for the briefing. Having gained access to the lightly defended Church Farm Business Park (five sheep on patrol), OPS2's war correspondent nears the heart of darkness (OK, Pivotal's conference room). Suddenly the tables are turned. There, waiting and armed with genial natures and a semi-automatic, hot coffee dispenser are Managing Director Jim Bamba, and Director of Technology (and double first in Artificial Intelligence from Edinburgh University) Alex McLean. Offered an exhaustively thorough demonstration of *Conflict: Desert Storm*, OPS2 makes its apologies, gets up off the floor, and prepares to ask the duo some straight questions.

Where did the idea for the game come from?

Bamba: After completing *Warzone 2100* we said to ourselves 'what can we do next? We've done a really complex RTS. Let's do something much more immediate. Something with characters, rather than tanks and cyborgs. Let's concentrate on the immediate stuff.' That's how the *Conflict* idea began. Keep your team alive and their experience will grow. There's a definite reward system.

How faithful to the events of the real Gulf War will the game be?

Bamba: *Conflict: Desert Storm* begins with the start of the conflict. Initially there are a couple of black ops missions. For example, as the Iraqis cross the border into Kuwait, you have to blow up a bridge to delay their invasion. Later, when the air war has started you have to infiltrate an enemy air base. That mission opens with you being landed inside Iraqi lines and you have to neutralise the SAM sites to allow your Apaches to come in and take out the MIG fighters. The next few missions take place around the time of Desert Shield [See Just Deserts boxout]. And then the ground war starts in with Desert Storm and you become part of the US forces, taking out enemy positions and tanks. The last mission has you entering an old crusader fortress in Baghdad itself. So,

these are fictional events based around the timescale of the real war.

Have you had technical assistance from Gulf War veterans at all?

McLean: We've been getting mail from US servicemen. They've seen our website and have pointed out a few discrepancies.

Like what?

Bamba: We originally had the US insignia on the soldiers' backpacks until we were told that US special forces wouldn't have that. They wouldn't give away where they were from. There'd be no details of the unit or anything, so that if they were captured they could claim they were part of a downed helicopter recovery team. Vets also corrected us on some of the weapons that were used. Things like that.

How have you gone about making a squad-based control system work easily on the Dual Shock 2 and without recourse to a keyboard?

McLean: One thing we've been keen to do is work PS2 controls into the game from the start. Even the guys working on the PC version play using console controllers. It's better than shoe-horning a console interface into the game later. **Bamba:** It works like this. Left analogue is back forward, strafe left and right. Right analogue is rotate and look up and down. **△** is fire. We came up with the setup about a year ago and then lots of games came out with the same idea, so we knew it was good! To get everyone in your team to follow you tap **△**, and to get them to stop, just tap it again. To give the order to open fire you press **Ⓢ**. **Ⓢ** activates the interface. **Ⓢ** triggers crouch, lie down, and stand up. It's pretty straightforward.

On the subject of commanding a squad, just how independently will the team members act?

McLean: They won't open fire unless certain conditions hold. One of those is the order to 'Go Loud' and break cover. So you can put the sniper on the top of a hill and give him the order at the right moment to give cover for the rest of the team. Another condition is when your team is fired upon. Your squad

PIVOTAL DECISION

The pedigree of *Conflict: Desert Storm*'s developer, Pivotal Games.

Pivotal Games is part of the development group Kaboom Studios that includes Silicon Dreams and Attention to Detail. It was established in April 2000 by a core group of veterans from Pumpkin Studios headed up by Jim Bamba, Nick Cook and Alex McLean. Although *Conflict: Desert Storm* is its first project, Pivotal's staff have worked on over 50 games over numerous platforms including *Warcraft*, *Gunship* and Pumpkin's real-time strategy title *Warzone 2100* – a game that won a StarPlayer award in *Official PlayStation Magazine* and was hailed as "the best strategy game on the PlayStation." Having developed a brand new graphics engine specifically for their new, action-based project, Pivotal Games' *Conflict: Desert Storm* is envisioned as the first game in a franchise that will take their core, team-based gameplay and apply it to conflicts throughout history. And then there's the matter of online gaming. Although the guys at Pivotal were reluctant to give details away, future *Conflict* games on PS2 will let you take the fight to the Internet. Bring it on!

Pivotal Games' Alex McLean, Jim Bamba, Nick Cook and Paul Dunning have a ball.



"Your squad won't just sit there waiting for an order...if they're attacked they will return fire"
Alex McLean



Jim Bamba and Alex McLean admire their work on *Conflict*.

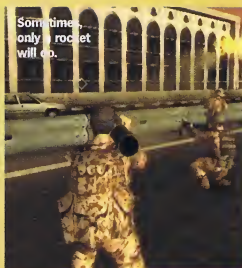


You can rely on your mates to effectively back you up.



Missions will play out at night, too.





Sometimes, only a rocket will do.



There won't be much time to check out the lovely sunsets.



Another consignment of SPZ 30 is dropped in by a Chinook.

won't just sit there waiting for an order. Put them anywhere on the map and if they're attacked they will return fire. They'll also fire if they're near you and you've been shot at. You also have the option of ordering them to cease firing. **Bambra:** What this means is that you can leave someone in a location, covering an area and they'll hold fast until you order them to 'Go Loud'. But if an enemy comes along and acquires them as a target, they'll fire first. You get a real sense that they won't just stand there and get killed because you're not controlling them.

McLean: Your squad members will also use appropriate weapons. If they can take out a number of enemies with grenades, they will. But equally, if you're in there, fighting, you can be reasonably confident that your teammates won't be throwing grenades down on top of you! They look at what's in the area and make a decision based on who's fighting there. Your comrades will also use the weapons intelligently. For example, they won't waste a grenade on a single enemy unless it's all they've got left. Instead they'll wait for a number of targets, or a soldier manning a gun emplacement. Only then will they yell "fire in the hole!" and it will all kick off. The thing is, if you're a gamer, the most important thing about any game rapidly becomes those elements that piss you off. That's why we're so keen to nail fundamentals like the AI.

Tell us more about the role of combat experience in the game.

McLean: When the characters in your team complete objectives they get rewarded with experience. One of the things we've tried to encourage is the idea that it's a really big deal to lose one of your guys. In order to complete a mission you need to have at least one of your current team survive. If that happens, the missing soldiers will be replaced by rookies from the academy, and they won't be very good

to begin with. Experience affects a number of things. Take the soldier's accuracy with weapons. The rookie will spot an enemy, dawdle for a little bit and then bring the gun up. The guys with combat experience will bring the sight straight up to the soldier's head. Then there's how much recoil the weapons will produce. The really experienced soldiers will fire in short, controlled bursts, whereas a rookie may well spray the rounds up a wall.

So weapons will lock-on to targets then?

McLean: Yes. It's incremental, tracking up the body towards the most important point which is, of course, the head. The auto targeting is always on, but if you move the stick, you will override the system and you can shoot wherever you want.

Is experience the only factor in the team members' abilities?

McLean: No. Each of the characters in the team has a different skill set (either Rifleman, Heavy Weapons, Electronics, Infiltration or Sniper). They're each a different type of soldier. For instance you can set C4 explosive charges. But the time it takes to set the charge will differ depending on both your soldier's skill set and his experience. There are many things like that which are dependent on experience. Any one soldier can do any of the special tasks, but naturally the assigned specialist can do it better than the others. So it's a very big deal when there's someone who you've gone through five or six missions with and he dies.

Do you think this will have any effect on how you play the game?

McLean: If a soldier is wounded badly and their health bar goes yellow, they'll drop to the ground and you've got three minutes to get to them. They'll be writhing around in agony and that's your opportunity to get to them with health packs. It throws up interesting



CONFLICT: DESERT STORM

□ dilemmas. You may have done well in a mission and be thinking "all I need to do is cross that bridge, get to the chopper and the objective's complete, but Connors is lying back there." So do you return to get him despite the potential risks because he's an experienced team member or not? There's a real drive towards team building. You're encouraged to look after your unit and make moral and strategic decisions.

Does this moral dimension come into play anywhere else?

McLean: With civilians. Take this one mission. Early on you come across this goat herder, and have a number of choices. You can simply choose to kill him. But if you shoot an unarmed civilian you will be penalised. Your experience will actually go down, so it's obviously not a good way to go. Instead, you can sneak around and avoid him. If he does see you he'll run away and warn the guards at the base just ahead and they'll go on a heightened state of alert. This means they'll be able to see further and will be that much more aggressive. And shooting him once he's spotted you will still count against you because you have made the mistake of being seen. Very *Bravo Two Zero*.

Is there a limit to the number of items in your inventory?

McLean: Yes, there is presently but not for much longer. In keeping with the game's focus on action we've tried not to look at detailed waypointing systems, or complex arming where you choose one weapon and it weighs this much so that means you can't pick up that other one. In other words we've really tried to steer clear of the *Rogue Spear/Rainbow Six/Hidden and Dangerous* type of gameplay. It's all well and good but we want to make a game that's an action-packed action/strategy game. So the strategy's there, but without all the complexity. There are necessary details, like certain

weapons are deemed too cumbersome to fire while on the move. But the restrictions that are in place are largely self evident and intuitive.

Is it possible to use found weapons?

Bambra: Yes. At one point in development we had all the enemy soldiers dropping weapons but the maps started getting very cluttered...

McLean: ...If you took out a group of soldiers with a hand grenade, for instance, it would start raining AK-47s!

Bambra: Now there are areas you can pick up rifles, rocket propelled grenades and so on...

Enough Time for some hands-on action. The game itself plays well, even with the obligatory rough edges still evident. Having focused on getting the fundamentals like core gameplay, AI and a brand new graphics engine sorted, the remaining wrinkles are being ironed out in the final push towards the game's release. The control system is easy to get to grips with, and commanding a squad who can take care of themselves in the heat of battle with minimal intervention from you is as refreshing as it sounds. Then there's the twist of a Multiplayer mode that includes the facility for two players to face off with two soldiers each.

And the game's subject matter? Whether such a relatively recent and (for many) cynical conflict as the Gulf War will strike a chord with gamers is, for now, an unknown quantity. Still, should the worst come to the worst, there's always a novel racing game in the wings; an idea that sprang from *Conflict: Desert Storm's* early development. McLean explains. "We were testing moving objects, and all that was available were default models. So we had fridges and cookers you could control and drive around the map. It rapidly became *White Goods Racer*, or *Fridge Racer* if you will." If Pivotal Games' finished game is as good as its puns are bad, everyone's going to be laughing. □

JUST DESERTS

A brief history of the Gulf War.

After a decade of developing its military forces (and borrowing heavily from neighbouring oil-producing countries to do so) Iraq, led by Saddam Hussein since 1979, was facing crippling inflation. When those self same neighbours agreed to lower oil prices in 1990 Iraq was forced to do the same or lose even more revenue. Saddam Hussein's grip on power was threatened and a drastic solution was needed. On 2 January 1991, Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait to almost nonexistent resistance. Not long after the annexation of Kuwait, the Iraqi military started massing on the Saudi Arabian border. Fearing the worst, Saudi Arabia called on its old ally the USA for help. President Bush (Snr) ordered US troops, ships and planes into the region to defend the country and Operation Desert Shield began. By the middle of January, the US effort had become a multinational force sanctioned by the United Nations. When it became clear that the Iraqi military had no intention of withdrawing from Kuwait it was decided they must be forced out. And so, Operation Desert Shield ended and Desert Storm began. Coupled with ongoing special forces missions, a massive and sustained air assault by allied planes largely destroyed the Iraqi defences. So much so that when the 'ground phase' of the war was started on the 24 February it turned into a rout and four days later Kuwait was liberated. Allied troops didn't pursue the fleeing army into Iraq, but in Pivotal Games' *Conflict: Desert Storm*, you'll get to take your special forces right into Baghdad itself...

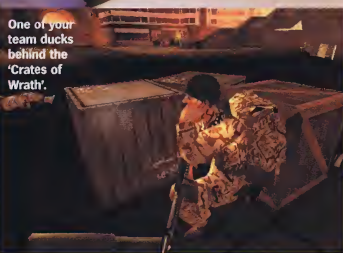
Tense, quiet periods often erupt into frenetic violence.



"The strategy's there, but without the complexity. This is an action-packed PS2 game." Alex McLean



Pivotal Game's Alex McLean plays a bit of 'air rifle'.



One of your team ducks behind the 'Crates of Wrath'.

SEGA



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RACING LINES

TEXT: AMOS WONG

Not only does *Auto Modellista* look unlike any driving game you've played, but it's heading up PS2's online ambitions. We visited Capcom's Osaka studios to meet the developers who are racing against the grain.



Welcome to the
stylised world of
Auto Modellista,
where pen and ink
move like stink.



In the house of Capcom, things are changing. The company is a Japanese game development giant justifiably famous for its character-driven titles, such as *Onimusha* and the legendary *Resident Evil* series. Now, however, the imaginative Japanese developer is gearing up to bring us the very different *Auto Modellista*.

This game is set to steer the Capcom portfolio in a new direction and tackle a new genre. It's a racing game, a theme previously untouched by the respected purveyor of action adventure. Not only is this a new route for Capcom, but it will take gaming down an unmapped road to spearhead PS2's networked titles, getting online even before *Gran Turismo*. It's also out to buck the trend of its peers who feel compelled to create increasingly photorealistic graphics.

At Capcom's monolithic marble and glass R&D building in Osaka, the game's producer, Noritaka Funamizu, and director, Makoto Ishih, concede that developing the potentially epoch-making title has been challenging. "It's just so different from all of our other

projects. No-one has done this kind of thing before," says Funamizu-san. Employed by Capcom in 1985 purely to play sport with the R&D chief, Funamizu worked his way up to eventually head the arcade development team. As the arcade and console departments merged, he became involved with almost every game produced at the company. *Auto Modellista* originated from Funamizu's desire to create a totally different gaming experience. And he seems to be right on track (pardon the pun).

TALK OF THE TOON

Just from a glance at the early screens and artwork on these five pages, it's clear that Funamizu's wish is well on its way to being granted. Taking on a Lichtenstein/Warhol Pop Art approach to graphics, the game has an exaggerated reality and comic book feel. "In 2D art, you can easily tell the style and work of a certain artist at a glance," Funamizu explains. "What we're trying to achieve is that same artistic quality with 3D art, which is why we gave the game its name." The racer's vibrant cel-shaded presentation, complete with stylised effects, unforgettably etches itself into your memory at first sight. This isn't just

another title that blends into an arguably saturated market. Coupled with the exciting online possibilities, it is set to evolve the "me too" racing genre and provide a totally fresh, new experience.

To realise this goal and distinguish *Auto Modellista*'s visuals from the current competition, Funamizu wanted to use cel-shaded graphics from the outset, but it took a lot to convince the development team that this was the way forward. "I had a lot of opposing opinion, perhaps because, at the time, the technique was so new," he says candidly. When Funamizu saw the first rough image of the graphics however, he knew that he could make it work. While cel shading has become the vogue amongst many developers of late, the results have often lacked a certain graphical finesse. In order to fully capture the nuance of the racing cars, Ishih and the R&D team ended up developing and patenting a new technique dubbed *Artisoon*.

SCALING THE HEIGHTS

Stressing the importance of artistry in game design, Funamizu moves on to opine that, while being a racing



Who said cel shading was just for cute platformers?

Cel shaded as it is, *Auto Modellista*'s world is no simplistic cartoon - as these images show.

The game aims to give races the exaggerated visual style that sims like GT3 can't provide.

AUTO MODELLISTA

fan isn't an absolute necessity as a designer, players can tell whether or not the vehicles have been created by a bona fide car enthusiast. Fortunately, *Auto Modellista*'s team is nothing less. "They're just so into it," laughs Funamizu. In order to fully recreate the licensed cars, an unorthodox approach was taken to model them; the team visited renowned model maker Tamiya. Funamizu enthuses: "Those guys are great at miniaturising cars. Say there's a very fine line on a car that defines it. If you reproduce the whole vehicle by pure calculation, it will look wrong to the eye, even though it's technically correct. When scaling the cars down you have to inject some artistic licence."

Further research involved Ishii-san sending the team onto the streets of Tokyo and also onto the Suzuka Circuit to sketch cars in order to familiarise themselves with handling the line work. "We also did a lot of hobby racing amongst ourselves, using low, lightweight 500cc cars," says Ishii. "We bought cheap used cars and filmed them racing on dirt courses, because if you drift and skid around these, the cars kick up a lot of smoke, dirt and dust. We could then refer to them later when working on putting the various effects in the game."

POLE POSITION?

AMs exaggerated effects take their cues from manga and anime. For example, 'speedlines' are used to accentuate the dynamics during high acceleration. Further to this, skidding tyres are accompanied by abstract, jaggy graphics trailing behind the cars, while contact with competitors' vehicles will issue sparks and a rumble via the Joypad. Although the game will also feature lens flare from the sun and from the headlights reflecting off rain droplets, the pair say that they'll look very different to GT3's effects.

Funamizu believes that, in the racing genre, there are two types of popular game: simulation (*Gran Turismo 3*, Polyphony Digital) and arcade (*Ridge Racer*, Namco). Observing that Namco's series seemed to be struggling to maintain its position of late, he saw a chance to steal the space. In order to accomplish this, Ishii then interjects that *Auto Modellista* will lean towards a simulation style but, at the same time, have more of a 'game flavour' than *Gran Turismo 3*. "Say you speed along a race track or a steep mountain course and videotape your driving," he suggests. "While you're doing this, you may have a certain image of

your driving performance that's often very different from the actual footage when you watch it. In your mind, you tend to exaggerate what you're doing to make yourself look cooler than you really are. What we're trying to do with this game is to reproduce that exaggerated image, to give players the sense of satisfaction of being a really great, cool driver."

The gameplay structure is largely what you'd expect from a racer, complete with CPU opponents and unlockable vehicles. Seven courses will be available across a mix of race circuits, mountain courses and cities, though the details of the tracks themselves are yet to be finalised. Ishii stresses that what makes this racer stand out is the customisation possibilities for the cars' appearances. "In short, you have the ultimate freedom. You'll feel as if you actually own the cars because you can decorate them to your own taste. You can create original stickers with an in-game paint program."

Without going into specifics, the pair promise a wealth of cosmetic parts found in the real car market "to make your car more aerodynamic." Performance enhancing upgrades will also be available and a great deal of care is



There's no mistaking the brutish lines of the growing Nissan Skyline.

DEMOLITION DERBY
If it's stylised, it's not exactly 'real', right? With that in mind, OPS2 asks Funamizu and Ishii the million dollar question: Will there be collision damage for the cars?

Funamizu: "We'd love to be able to do it!"

Ishii: "We tried to reproduce damage visually, but some of the car manufacturers would not allow it. They have their own rules, so we had no choice but to comply with their wishes."

Funamizu: "The strictest manufacturer began with an 'H'. And you can't afford to not have its cars in a racing game, because they're huge."

Ishii: "The policies of car manufacturers are so different from one to the other. Some say that you could shoot missiles and blow the cars up if you wanted to, while others say you can't put a scratch on them. One of the things we wanted to do online was to have a car sumo mini-game: put a lot of contestants into a small, restricted space and have them try to smash each other out. We thought it would get players excited, but we had to give up on that one!"

Spectators can opt to experience the race first-hand by taking a ride in the passenger seat



Racing is going to be a visceral experience.

going into deciding exactly what will be offered. The developers have taken into account that not all gamers are hardcore racing fans. The enhancements will therefore be more exaggerated than those in *GT3*. For example, Ishii explains that, "by changing certain parts, you should be able to tell immediately if the car's performance has been improved."

As if all this wasn't enough to get gamers excited, *Auto Modellista's* online gameplay is where the fun really starts. "We view offline play as preparation, like when you change your clothes and check how you look before you go out. When you feel 100 percent ready, that's when you go online to show off your car and skills." Networked play will act like a virtual race meet; players can talk shop and boast about their car's customised enhancements. Fans of a particular car will be able to form a community, hold meetings and compete against other car fan groups. A total of eight challengers can compete in an online race, while others can participate on the courses as spectators. Better still, should a particular car's performance pique your interest, spectators can opt to experience the race first-hand by riding in the passenger seat. Although this

feature is yet to be finalised, extra background music, as well as extra elements that are not on the DVD, may be downloadable to the hard disc drive.

NET WORTH?

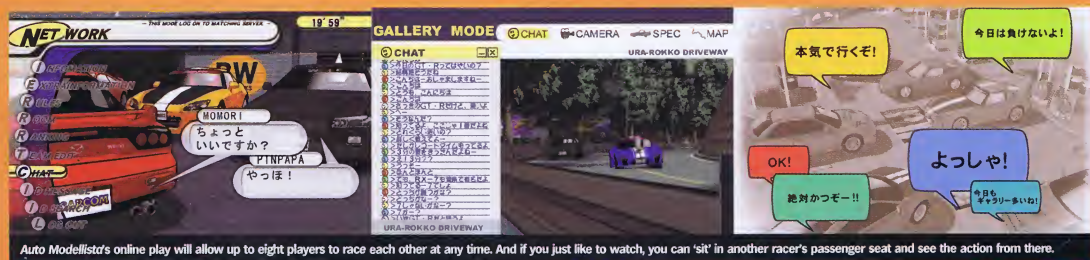
When asked how the game will connect to the network, Funamizu tells *OPS2* it hasn't been decided yet. Currently, in Japan, the massively popular *Capcom Vs SNK 2* and *Gundam: Federation Vs Zion DX* utilise the KDDI Multi Matching Service via a 56k modem (KDDI is a telephone company in Japan that is providing a dedicated service to link up Capcom's networked games via a 56k modem). "Broadband is coming soon. We don't know all the details yet, so we can't definitely say which way we're going to go." Technically though, the 56k service ought to be able to handle *Auto Modellista's* gameplay if broadband networks experience teething problems.

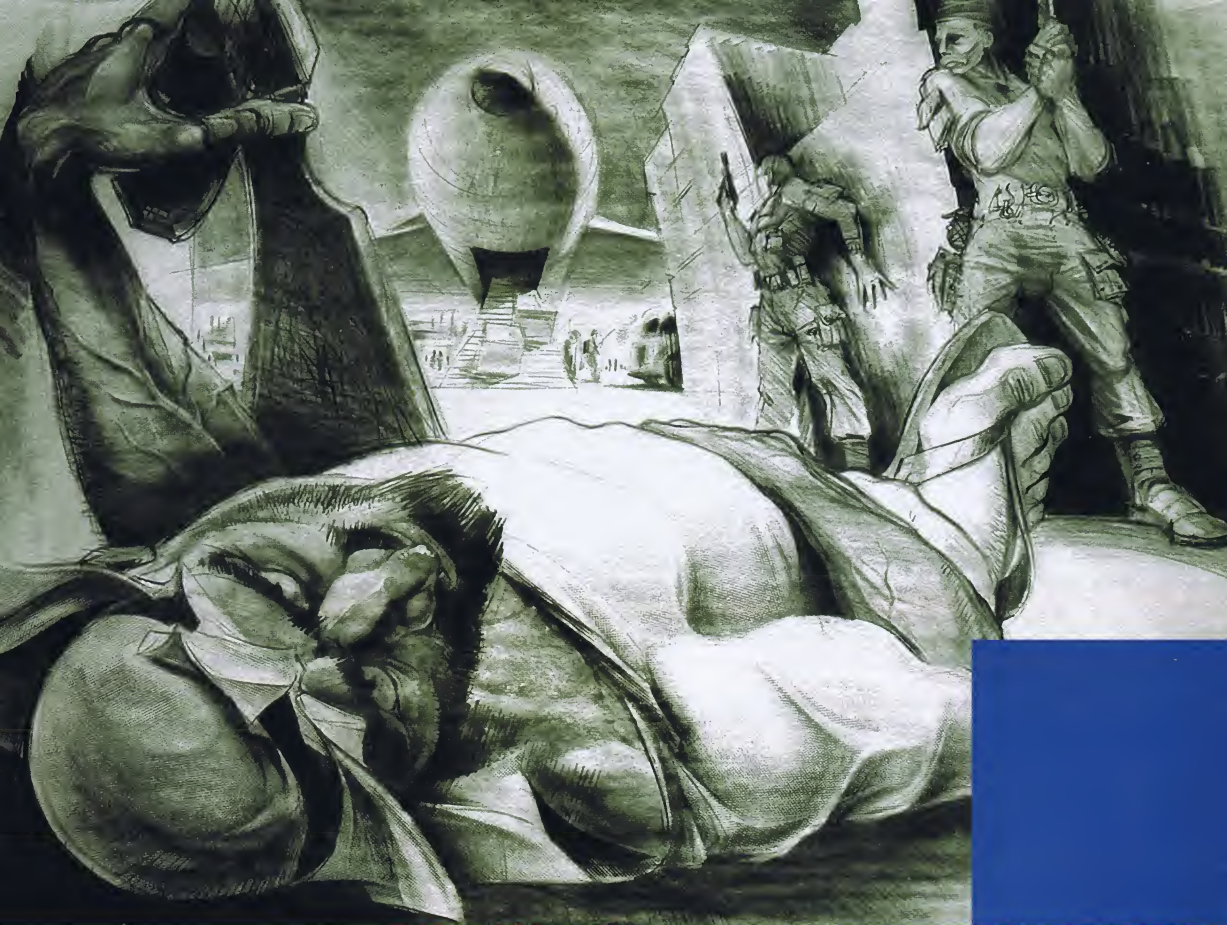
Before final decisions are made about *Auto Modellista's* online future, the team is still busy working on the graphics. Funamizu and Ishii consider the game to be only around 20 percent complete right now. "The environment isn't completely created using Artistoony yet,"

states Funamizu. "The game's graphics need to be evaluated as a whole: the environments, the cars, all the effects. Until you can see all the elements in place, you can't really judge it – we still need to work on more tracks and environmental elements."

Previously, a forthright member of the gaming press had remarked that what the team was doing with *Auto Modellista* was too risky and reckless. The pair didn't take the comment to heart. "Maybe in a way, he was right," Funamizu laughs – he views their risk taking as very much a positive thing.

We generally imagine the ultimate evolution of a realistic driving game as one where reality is mimicked to perfection and a replay is indistinguishable from a live broadcast. But is this really what gamers want? Does it even make for the best kind of driving game? Innovation always involves an element of risk, and chances are that Funamizu's ambitious project will turn heads and claim admirers upon its arrival some time in the autumn. It's already giving the racing genre a welcome shot of character. But then again, that's what Capcom's been doing to the games world for years. □





TEXT: RICHIE YOUNG / PHOTOGRAPHY: RICHIE YOUNG

SEAL OF APPROVAL?

SOCOM: US Navy Seals was a shining star at E3 2001. At the time, it was lauded for its ambition and innovation, as it thrilled and excited audiences. It's now one year on, so *OPS2* jetted to Seattle, Washington to get the low down.

Publisher Sony
Developer Zipper
Players 1 or
Network
Release Late 2002




The development team at Zipper Studios aren't ones to take the easy route, there's absolutely no doubt about that. Where other companies stand guilty of regurgitating someone else's ideas, or claim to 'push the boundaries' of gaming, Zipper is lining up to take on one of the biggest gaming challenges around. With its latest project (now almost three years in the making), the team is taking a genuine shot at moving console gaming to new, uncharted levels.

Even 18 months after release in Australia, the PlayStation 2 is yet to be thoroughly put through its paces. When it was launched, gamers were enticed by the prospect of experiencing the 'next generation' of gaming but, in reality, we haven't really seen much beyond a leap (granted, it has been massive) in graphical clarity and game size. *SOCOM: US Navy Seals* is aiming to change all of that and, from what *OPS2* has seen, may well mark yet another defining moment

In the world of videogames.

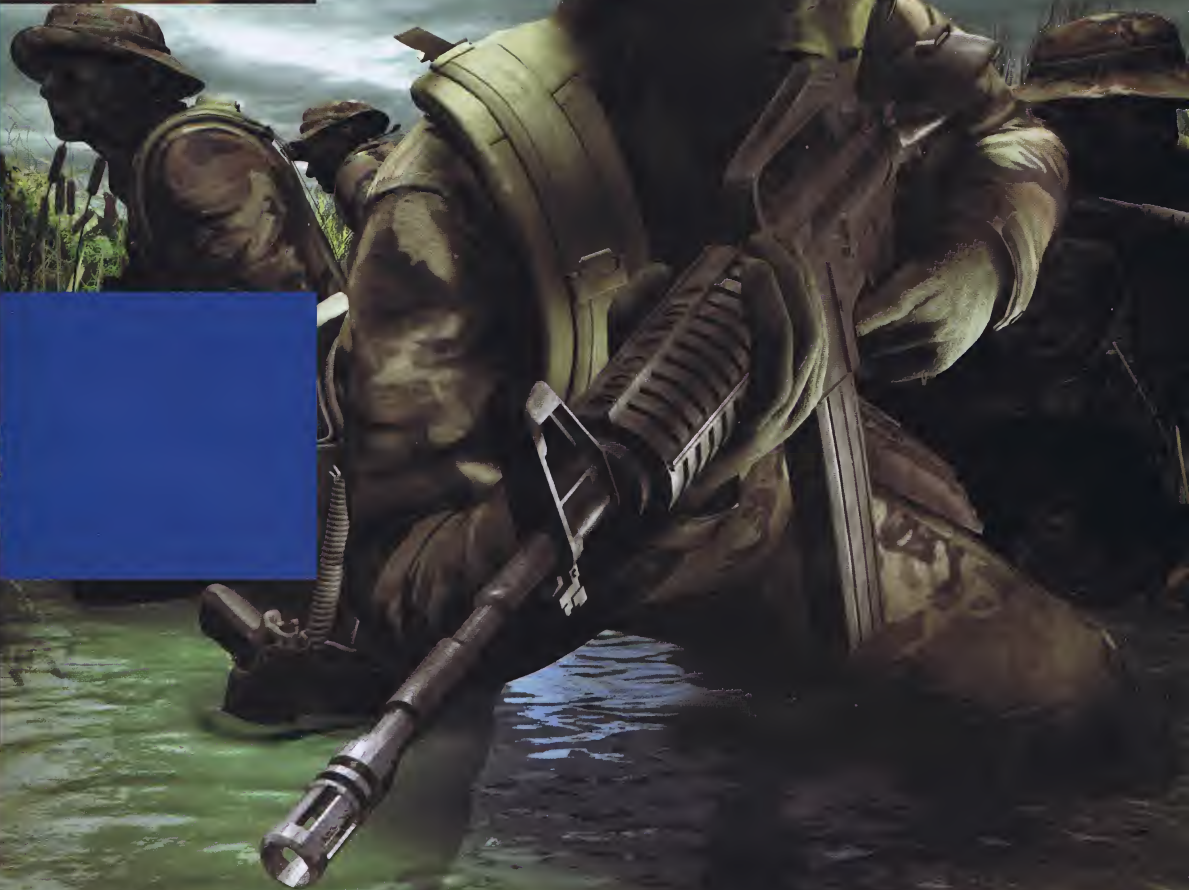
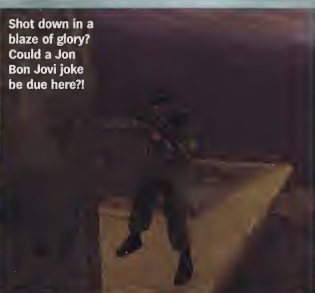
The two biggest elements *SOCOM* is set to introduce are online play and the voice-recognition commands that will come via the accompanying USB-compatible headset. Certainly there are other games already being played online via the PS2 (online facilities will be up and running in Australia later this year; see *Born in the USA*), and there are other games being developed that will recognise human voice prompts. But the sheer size and ambition of this particular project is undeniable. Internet gaming has long been the realm of PC gamers, and their console counterparts have had to be content with split screen battles when it came to gunfire and deathmatch battles. While it's played in the third-person (i.e. not a first-person shooter), *SOCOM* will open up the famous world of skirmishes to lounge rooms everywhere.

While at Zipper HQ, the team on hand demonstrated various levels and features to *OPS2* before we were given the opportunity to play 



SOCOM: US NAVY SEALS

Shot down in a
blaze of glory?
Could a Jon
Bott Javi joke
be due here?!





ARTIFICIAL OR ORGANIC?

Artificial Intelligence. Is this the final frontier of software development and will it remain the bane of programmers everywhere? With ever advancing technology, graphical developments are somewhat of a given, resulting in increasingly higher polygon counts in future games. Realistic AI, on the other hand, is a quite different story and the battle to mimic realistic human behaviour and emotions continues. This was one of the main obstacles facing the team behind *SOCOM*. Throughout most of the game, players will be accompanied by other troops (platoons will vary in size, from a pairing of two to teams of 16, depending on the mission) and having them behave like real-life Navy Seals posed quite a challenge.

Firstly, the Seals had to recognise danger, understand the mission briefing and also be able to recognise and process commands (from you) during each mission. The programmers also wanted them to exhibit individual intelligence and if they recognised significant behaviour they could actually defy orders to avoid injury or death. Programmer Mike Gutmann played an important role in this process and said of the Seals, "They have an obsessive focus on teamwork, and you fight with what you've got." This mentality is very particular with these elite special forces and it was something that the team was required to pay close attention to.

He continued, "We wanted to minimise the AI and was seen as a big step. Making them 'just right'. They'll rarely take the same path twice, making it more realistic. Using the team is cool, you get feedback from them! You'll hear them talk to you - making it feel like you're interacting and you're part of the team. Games like the *Sims*, *Black and White*, *GTA 3* and *Munch's Oddysee* have all made significant contributions to how computers can successfully drive software to mimic character behaviour. *SOCOM* has addressed Seal behaviour with the same kind of detail, and we should see similar impressions made when the final version is released."

Tougher than
nail! These
Jeds eat Nutri
Grain and only
drink Solo...

You're able to
play as either a
Seal or a
Terrorist.

Some areas are
reminiscent of
*Metal Gear
Solid*.

If only there
were
a snowboarding
section in the
game...

The various
buildings add
plenty of variety
to skirmish
tactics.

HEAD CASE

On release, *SOCOM* will be available with a special headset, designed specifically to accommodate the game's voice-recognition capabilities. The set will plug directly into your PS2's USB port and will not only allow you to communicate with AI teammates, but also to speak with human teammates or opponents during multiplayer bashes. Four 'channels' are available for this, allowing you to speak to specific members (team mates or opposition, and there is even a channel specifically reserved so that players not in the game can speak to one another). *SOCOM*'s gameplay places great emphasis on this aspect and the voice-recognition will be based on a "Subject/Verb/Object" system. A typical command would, for example, include, "hold fire", "fire at will" or "run to". It does take some getting used to, and while it's still possible to use your Dual Shock only, most players will find the head set preferable. The PAL (European/Australian) version will be different to the one released in the US to accommodate different accents!

*FCW Manny P

BORN IN THE USA

The USA is already starting to enjoy what life will be like when the PS2 is fully integrated and online. Sony Computer Entertainment America is racing to be online by their 'fall', meaning a September kick off for them should be on the cards. While local details are still somewhat woolly, SCEA has announced its plans and, judging by the uniform regulations of the company, it's a fair bet that we Aussies will be able to enjoy something very similar.

Nothing can be unequivocally confirmed but Sony is very like to adopt an 'open' system, whereby developers themselves will decide whether, and how much, to charge gamers for playing their games online. Sony won't charge people, although gamers will need to buy an adaptor that will be able to access the equivalent services of either a dial-up modem or high-speed connection.

SOCOM's support of up to 16 players was very impressive; and *OPS2* is certainly looking forward to taking on some international competition during a bloody skirmish. Be sure to keep your eye on *OPS2*'s E3 coverage where an announcement is likely to be made!



SOCOM: US NAVY SEALS



the game ourselves and give the playable modes a thorough going over. Zipper co-founder, Brian Soderburgh claimed that the version was between the 'Alpha' and 'Beta' stage of development – which, in terms of the entire cycle, makes it all still rather early. Based on the elite military forces of the USA and, given the political climate since the events of September 11 last year, Zipper certainly faced a few challenges in making a 'wartime' game. The team maintains that it does not intend to make 'political statements' in the game and has made some specific changes to reflect this. The countries involved also underwent close scrutiny and a thorough selection process and gamers will notice the inclusion of countries like Turkmenistan and the omission of Afghanistan and certain Middle Eastern countries. *OPS2* feels however, that the game will ride on the wave of patriotism coursing through the US at the moment. Indeed, the game entirely relies on the premise of "Navy Seals Vs terrorists". Other countries that form the basis of levels are Thailand and the Congo. Playing the game suggested that some levels are more enjoyable than others. It's important in factoring in the 'earliness' of the code, however, as the Congo level did not exhibit the same bugs and 'blockiness' of the others. Based on this code, the game did appear 'buggy' and often floating weapons could be seen. During a 16-player battle, however, it was all very entertaining. Aiming and moving about was not smooth, though, and the frame rate was not yet optimised. *SOCOM* will be made "in association with the US Navy Seals" meaning that, for the first time, a Special Forces Unit has had a direct link to a videogames company. The team's primary goal was to make the game an authentic experience and to recreate as closely as possible what life as a Seal is really like. Speaking with the team, the guys felt previous games and movies have often been 'cheesy' and inaccurate portrayals, and wanted to rectify these

issues in their own project. Historically, multiple teams have worked on various games at Zipper. For *SOCOM*, though, every member has dedicated their expertise full-time to the project. Gameplay reveals that this adventure includes many different elements. With plenty of gunplay (there are 33 real weapons, as used by the Seals), gamers will also find that stealth and strategy plays a very important role, with a massive array of mission types to complete. The three main mission objectives are based on Demolition (blowing up stuff), Extraction (Rescue) and Eradication (Deathmatch). Subsequent plays through each stage (some take place in the wilderness, others see you trying to infiltrate ships and buildings), showed that the game shared many elements with *Metal Gear Solid*. When trying to gain access into certain areas, for instance, avoiding detection is based on the same premise as Konami's game. *SOCOM* did not appear nearly as polished, although there are no confines of corridors and action takes place in open, outdoor environments. Dragging corpses out of the light, soldiers with visual cones and the shared ability to detect sound are all the same. Generally speaking, *SOCOM* can also be likened to *Counterstrike* or *Rogue Spear*, although it is far more sophisticated. Details are at a premium and you can expect to be able to shoot out lights. Character AI is a very important element here, as enemy soldiers are able to recognise doors and windows breaking. Their state of mind will also range from being completely unaware of your presence to actively pursuing you and their 'situational awareness' is also very impressive. Not only can they detect moving grass (where you may be hiding), but your NPC teammates will regularly report to you as well. Impact points have been placed on each soldier and a hit to the arm or leg will result in different injuries and reactions. As such, a direct bullet to the head will be a fatal kill shot. *OPS2* was hoping



ON THE FLY

Zipper Interactive was founded in 1995 by Brian Soderburgh and Jim Bosler. When it comes to the core values as a development studio, Zipper's company philosophy reads, "To focus on creating 3D real-time action titles". *SOCOM: US Navy Seals* will mark their most important game to date and the company lists its 36 staff members as its greatest strength. Some of Zipper's staff have programmed for the likes of Boeing and Delta Graphics and have developed *SIMNET* – a primary battle simulator that is still used by the US military and NATO Forces. Other key contributions were also made to the software behind the *Wart Hog* attack jet, M1 tank and Apache helicopter simulators. Jim Bosler, CEO, says, "SIMNET, in layman's terms is similar to a game being played on a regular PC. It's multiplayer and can be described as the ultimate God game. Every single one of the actual resources that are used in a battle are represented on a computer screen". Other staff members boast time spent working for the likes of Electronic Arts, Square, Nintendo and Microsoft. Zipper have mainly developed PC games like *Mech Warrior 3*.

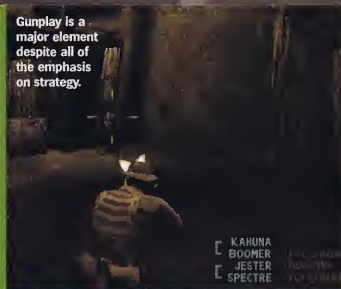
SOCOM: US NAVY SEALS



Looks like the warehouse in *Reservoir Dogs*... where's Mr Pink?

Gunplay is a major element despite all of the emphasis on strategy.

Some of the special levels will place you in new situations.



that joint missions with SAS or Allied soldiers would be included for a touch of Aussie flavour, although this has not been included. In Zipper's attempt at authenticity, no expense or effort has been spared. The graphics did not appear as sharp as we expected, although bullet holes in objects like trees and rocks can be seen and full screen anti-aliasing and buffering has been achieved. The level based in Thailand looked particularly lush. Furthermore, the Seals themselves provided data and samples of their uniforms, so all the gear is identical to that worn by the real-life troops. The painted faces of the Seals are even the same as some of their real counterparts. Each soldier has a distinct way of putting on their camouflage makeup and many of them volunteered their services for 360-degree head scans. The team at Zipper was so concerned about having realistic audio from the artillery that it recorded sounds from Seal gunfire and bullets hitting objects! The 16-player online battles still require a bit of work in some areas. But they're still very enjoyable, and when you successfully work as a team, the experience improves exponentially. 12 maps have been included for this element, and the team stressed that the multiplayer levels are totally different from those in the rest of the game. Whether *SOCOM: US Navy Seals* is able to achieve all of its objectives can only be judged when the completed version is finally released. At this stage, it appears that certain areas need to undergo some 'polishing', although Zipper is adamant that the game will experience vast improvements over the coming months. Regardless, this is bound to be a landmark title in terms of innovation and could garner a lot of deserved attention.

* *SOCOM: US Navy Seals* should be released in Australia by Christmas. It will be accompanied by a DVD on the Seals themselves. □



SO WHAT?

What the hell is *SOCOM* anyway? Just as the Australian military has the SAS, the USA's elite forces go under the banner of *SOCOM*, meaning Special Operations Command. Structurally, all of the Special Forces units (like the US Rangers and Delta Force) report to *SOCOM*. Even the US Navy Seals fall under their remit, reporting directly to *SOCOM* and not as often mistakenly believed to the US Navy. As such, the Army component (US Army Special Operations Command), the Navy component (Naval Special Warfare Command) and the Air Force component (Air Force Special Operations Command) report to *SOCOM* in times of battle. *SOCOM* states that, amongst other things, it develops doctrine, tactics, techniques and procedures for all special operations; conducts specialised courses; trains assigned forces; monitors the preparedness of its forces and acquires unique equipment, material, supplies and services for intelligence purposes. Much of *SOCOM*'s work actually goes unnoticed. Being so highly sought-after, there is obviously a strong element of secrecy surrounding their activities. Thus, most of *SOCOM*'s successful missions go unnoticed. The Americans believe that their *SOCOM* forces are the most highly trained, toughest and most professional in the world. *OPS2* reckons the Aussies (and even the Poms for that matter) would eat 'em for breakfast!



JIM BOSLER

During our studio visit, *OPS2* spoke with Jim Bosler about the direction of his latest project and that of the company. Indeed, it was through Jim's personal friendships with real-life US Rangers that his interest in developing this software started; and where the *SOCOM* dream was initially spawned.



How did you initially hook up with Sony for this project?

A number of people have worked for the US military as defence contractors. When Sony initially entered into discussions with us they knew they wanted to do a team-based Special Forces title. I proposed the Seals because I think that they fit best for this type of gameplay.

Tell us about your reaction to September 11...

We were sensitive to it. I think that it raised everyone's awareness about how important the Special Forces are. We already had tremendous respect for them and so it really did make us want to do right by the game. We did have to adapt one level, where we had a downed airliner, and we decided to take that out because we didn't want to bring up bad feelings. We tried to be realistic but not reflect current political events. It's a game. It's not a political statement and we certainly would not want to do something that would be upsetting.

As far as the game goes, the Navy Seals themselves have helped you out a bit. What sort of involvement was it, though?

We've worked with the Admiral, and even had his son come down. The Seals have been really helpful and have allowed us to make the game that we want to. We show them the work in progress whenever we want to show them and ask for feedback at that point. They've been extremely helpful and very co-operative with resources. There hasn't been any censorship or changes per se.

The game is very strategic and quite complex. Do you think that it may prove too complex for some gamers?

It's our goal to have the game play very simply to begin with, and make the learning curve an important part of that from there on. We think the complexities will come more in terms of the tactics and advancing through later missions. The actual control system is quite easy and one of the main things that we've been doing with Sony is play testing. Sony is very active when it comes to ensuring we're on top of all of the design issues.

What about opposition and competing games? Which ones did you look to, or play?

We looked at a lot of titles. *Counter Strike*, we've done shooters ourselves, *Rainbow Six*, *Rogue Spear*, *Metal Gear Solid*, *Medal of Honour*. We just tried to borrow the best and learn lessons from what didn't work so well. It gives us a great awareness level and helps us try and do new things. We think that *Metal Gear Solid 2* is a different game to ours. We admire *MGS 2*. It's obviously an awesome title but we don't think that competing head to head with it. We're more of a tactical action game dealing with open spaces. We are, though, trying to draw on some of the fun elements that *Metal Gear Solid 2* offered and we should be able to offer a very rich experience similar to them.

Reviews Charter

FACT: OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE'S reviews are the best in the business. Our crack squad of reviewers play the games longer, harder and better than anyone else. And we absolutely love what we do.

It's this dedication that means you can trust our scores above anyone else's. Whether a game's superb or sewage, our experts will tell it like it is with buckets of opinion rather than a few cheap gags and some PR nonsense. Our experienced reviewers have written for the game's industry's most revered publications, both here and abroad. What's more, our writers have plenty of 'heritage' in the industry, having a collective history spanning into decades. Rest assured that these are opinions you can trust.

Next time you head off to spend your hard-earned cash on a PlayStation 2 game, make sure you read our reviews first.

REVIEW RATINGS

HERE'S WHAT OUR REVIEW SCORES STAND FOR:

- 10/10** Nigh on revolutionary. A game that could change the face of gaming forever
- 09/10** A truly astonishing game. If you have a PlayStation 2, you need this now
- 08/10** Highly recommended
- 07/10** Good, solid fare that's definitely well worth a look
- 06/10** Better than average, and ideal for hardcore fans of the genre
- 05/10** An average game
- 04/10** Poor, but still with the odd moment
- 03/10** Extremely disappointing
- 02/10** To be avoided
- 01/10** Beer mat

THE OPS2 AWARDS

We don't hand out high scores for nothing so when you see one of these, you'll know it's a sign of quality. Look for them on game boxes.



The Gold Award is a rare gem and only to be given to PS2 games that score that magic 10/10. The only game to get Gold is MGS2. Too right!



The Silver Award is for games that receive 9/10. If you see this, it's a sign of star quality, indicating that you should buy this game now!



The Bronze Award is for games that score 8/10. These games are highly recommended and are 100% guaranteed to satisfy.

media

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DEUS EX

Check all your FPS preconceptions at the door.

058



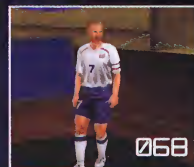
062



064



065



068

BLOOD OMEN 2

062

Kain's back and he's not a happy camper.

SMASH COURT TENNIS PRO

064

The cartoon characters are out, big names are in.

EOE: EVE OF EXTINCTION

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GRANDIA II

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ISS2

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2002 FIFA WORLD CUP

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DYNASTY WARRIORS 3

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PS one™

The latest titles for the little grey fella

THE HOOPS079





DEUS EX

Ion Storm finds God in Sony's small black machine.

Publisher Eidus
Developer Ion Storm
Price \$99.95
Players 1
Out Now
Web Site
www.deusex.com
60Hz Mode No
Widescreen No
Surround Sound No

Back story

Deus Ex was the brainchild of Warren Spector, Studio Director for Ion Storm. Back in 1994, bored of slaying dragons as a furry-footed dwarf, he conceived the idea of an adventure game set in the real world and came up with *Trouble Shooter* for EA. However, the software publisher refused to back the project and so Spector's idea was put on the back burner. That was until he wound up at Ion Storm and was told to "make the game of your dreams". The rest is history, with Deus Ex enjoying much critical and commercial success on its PC release in 2000 and scooping a BAFTA award for Innovation. EA must be kicking itself.



As a host of PC gamers get ready to mock, let us start this review by saying that Ion Storm has pulled off the unimaginable – it's made Deus Ex on PS2 arguably better than on PC. How so? It's less complicated, more accessible and equally as riveting. This game is every inch the god that the 'deus' in the title suggests. Yes people, now you too can partake in the religion that has had PC purists speaking in tongues for months!

Set in the not too distant future, you play JC Denton, a soldier on the payroll of a global anti-terrorism unit who must stop at nothing to rid the world of vile organisations that make Bin Laden's lot look like trick or treaters. One of the aims when making the game was to transport the intrigue of exploration and adventure from the fantasy realms of traditional RPGs into a real world environment, but Denton is far from your average bloke on the street. He is a cybernetically enhanced machine of a man with a wealth of skills that cater for every possible scenario in the field of duty... But ultimately, he's just a tool with which you can do as you please.

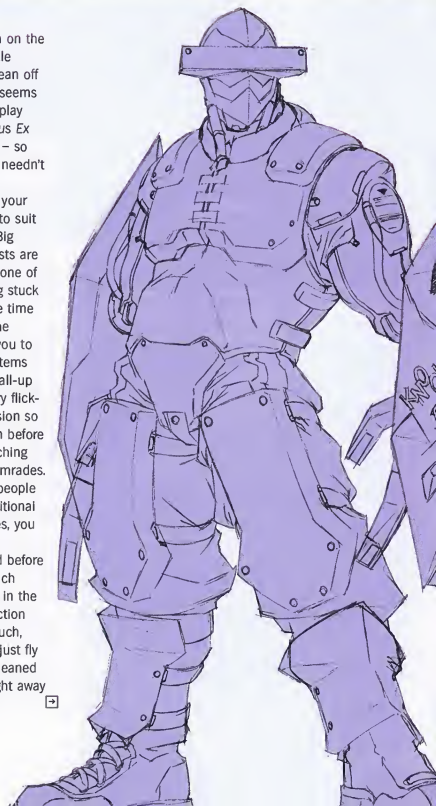
CREDIT WHERE IT'S DUE

Let's start at the beginning. Before play commences, you must purchase special skills for Denton (although you can rename him if you prefer). You have 5,000 credits to blow, but you must spend them wisely because your choices could ultimately affect the entire playing experience. So, what do you do? Splash out 1,125 credits for a hacking course that will enable you to manipulate computers in order to glean vital pass codes needed for a stealth

approach? Or do you whack 1,350 down on the table for a crash course in how to handle heavy artillery in order to blow doors clean off their hinges? We must admit, the latter seems the most inviting prospect from a gameplay point of view. But, as you'll discover, Deus Ex proves rewarding to all styles of assault – so any tree-hugging pacifists amongst you needn't feel excluded from the party.

With your money spent on teaching your terminator new skills and tailoring him to suit your own specific needs, it's off to the Big Apple where a gang of tool-up terrorists are hiding out in the Statue Of Liberty with one of your agents held hostage. Before getting stuck into the thick of it, though, you can take time out at the start to get accustomed to the intuitive new PS2 Interface that allows you to scan your inventory, peruse and equip items and enhance your abilities in a single call-up screen, thus eradicating the unnecessary flick-book of menus which made the PC version so intimidating. You can also use this 'calm before the storm' moment to get used to searching for objects and conversing with your comrades.

The way in which you interact with people is what likens Deus Ex to the more traditional RPGs. At certain conversational junctures, you are presented with a choice of possible dialogue that must be carefully selected before being spoken back to your recipient. Such dialogue can trigger different outcomes in the level and determine how the ensuing action pans out. It really pays to talk and, as such, Deus Ex isn't the sort of game you can just fly through. Essential information can be gleaned from pretty much anyone, but not straight away – you have to earn their trust. A classic





To conserve ammo, get in close and personal, then butcher him with your bowie knife.

Eavesdropping on conversations helps you learn more of what's going on the world.

Unfortunately, you can't hold up the guards as in MGS2.



Would you buy supplies from this woman?



You will often be chastised for the unnecessary use of violence.



Search high and low for objects to bolster your inventory. Everything has a use.

BOX CLEVER

Succeeding in Deus Ex requires rational thought, the ability to remain calm under pressure, and a detailed knowledge of your surroundings. So it helps if you know what all those different boxes can be used for...



Supply Crate

Easily identifiable by the fact that they're made of wood and your cursor tells you that they contain supplies, these can be smashed open to reveal new items that will prove invaluable for the rocky road ahead.



TNT Crate

Think of these as a mine and a grenade rolled into one. You can either pick them up and lob them at enemies, or you can manoeuvre them beside doors, guards or supply crates and pop a cap in to detonate.



Cardboard Box

Okay Snake may have left his scent all over this one, but you can pick these up and carry them around before dropping to your knees and hiding behind them to avoid the unwanted attention of any patrolling terrorist guards.



Metal Crates

These can be picked up and manoeuvred to form steps leading up to bigger crates, which in turn will enable you to access rooftops, air vents and secret passages needed to infiltrate the heavily patrolled sections.

example of this is when you meet a hard-bitten grunt early on. If you try to tone down his talk, which essentially amounts to "Let's just get in there and kill the lot of 'em" he'll become disappointed that a one-man killing machine such as yourself doesn't share the same opinion. Encourage him with words along the lines of "Yeah, I love applying a blow-torch to a terrorist's toes, me!" then he'll promptly offer to fog your some extra weaponry he nicked from the armoury earlier. What a guy!

FREEDOM FIGHTER

What sets Deus Ex aside from other first-person shooters is the freedom of choice. Although the playing areas have been slightly reduced from those in the PC version, each level is non-linear so you can tackle it in any manner you think is appropriate. When infiltrating a terrorist-infested warehouse, for instance, you can go in the front door with all guns blazing, hit them from below by swimming in via the sewers, or surprise them by finding a way up onto the roof and them raining shots down from above.

Of course, this is if you decide to fight at all. Killing people isn't ever your main objective – these usually involve locating a prisoner or finding a specific object – so you can do without guns altogether and creep around in the shadows, tossing objects to distract guards before making a break for it in the opposite direction. If you adopt this approach then you don't have the luxury of a Metal Gear Solid-style proximity radar, so you can't actually see where the guards are or which way they're facing without popping your head out from a crate and having a sly peak. If they just so happen to be staring right at you when you do so, then what the hell? A quick change of tactics and it's all guns blazing again. You aren't confined to any one strategy and it is the ability to mix and match that makes the game so fantastically compelling in the

Yes! Now you too can partake in the religion that has had PC purists speaking in tongues

long run.

Also, you can choose to take any path through a particular section without being restricted or cut off from other possible paths because all routes ultimately lead to the same place. This is why we spent the best part of a day just free roaming and exploring the first level, examining where each route takes you and weighing up the consequences. There are loading breaks to endure at certain junctures of the stage, but even this doesn't prohibit where you go. Unlike, say, Max Payne, you can backtrack through levels and even return to old missions to search for missed information and stock up with ammunition and gizmos such as lockpicks, code breakers and medkits.

In fact, you are actively encouraged to explore and the unlocking of new areas is rewarded with skill points which you can then use to enhance your abilities and technical know-how. We say it again, this isn't a game you can just breeze through complacently. Yet even with so much going on, the gameplay isn't bogged down by unnecessary complexity, either. The learning curve is perfectly balanced so that you can just pick up and play while gradually getting accustomed to new possible uses for items and objects as you go. The layout of the levels also means you never get lost; there is always a means to get to wherever you need to be, and new routes are just waiting to be discovered – but only when you know the game well enough to have the vision to spot them. Now, that's good level design.

REVIEW

DEUS EX



HELP THE HOMELESS

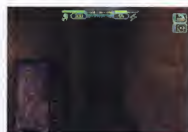
However tempting it is just to pistol-whip the plague-riddled burns that frequent the dimly-lit streets of 2054 New York, there are times when it actually pays to be nice to them. For example, talk to a starving homeless boy down by the docks and you could do one of two things: clip him round the ear and send him on his way – in which case his response may be a curt “up yours, mister!” – or you could offer him some food and see what he’ll do for you in return. He could be a useful aide.



1. Undecided about which avenue to take into a heavily guarded fortress, you bide your time by talking to a grubby peasant boy.



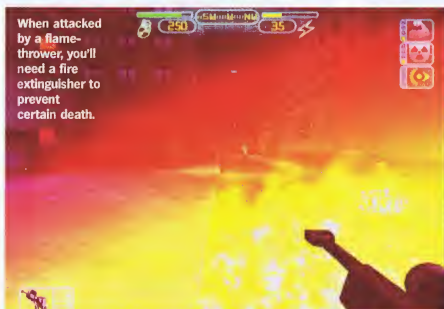
2. Opting not to go for the straightforward interrogation, you earn his trust by offering him food.



3. In return, he tells you of a secret passage that you would have otherwise missed behind a nearby vending machine.



4. Input the code he gives you and you’ll be able to sneak into the fortress completely undetected via the back door.



CAUSE AND EFFECT

The ‘real world’ in which Deus Ex is set owes a lot to older generation first-person shooters such as *Duke Nukem*. By this we mean that practically every object and item can be interacted with.

Cigglies can be smoked, taps can be turned on and women can be harassed in toilets, all of which serve no great purpose in the grand scheme of things. However, buying food from vending machines and drinking from water fountains replenishes health, while switching on lights can reveal hidden panels which would have otherwise been missed. Before long, you’ll be tinkering with everything to see if it has an effect, even if it is just interacting with a pinball machine to hear the satisfactory ricochet of silver balls.

This attention to detail extends out onto the field of combat. If you gun down a terrorist you can search their body for supplies. Return later to the same body and files can be seen buzzing around the corpse, probably planting eggs for the natural process of decomposition to occur. Maybe if you come back much later there will be only bones and a bad odour remaining. Nothing seems inconceivable in this game.

The only real quail is that the graphics don’t match the gameplay in the Innovation department. Frame rate and glitching are never issues, but lack of imagination in the background design is evident. The atmosphere is supposed to be bleak, but environments can often look drab and featureless. This shouldn’t really affect the experience, but without the

constant thrilling shootouts of something like *Half-Life* to distract you, you’re occasionally reminded that you’re playing a two-year old PC game. Deus Ex is constantly compelling, but lacking that true next-gen graphical flair, it might not blow your mind.

If we had to fault the game in any other department, it would be the lack of a multiplayer mode – the maze-like levels are crying out for some deathmatch activity. But then Deus Ex is truly a thinking man’s game and to dumb it down with mere gunplay alone would be almost sacrilegious to its cause. By enabling you to plot your own path through the levels and feel rewarded whatever cause of action you take, Deus Ex has effectively coined an entirely new genre that is incredibly hard to pigeonhole... so we gave up trying. It’s an action game, an FPS, an adventure. Once you’ve played Deus Ex, it’ll change the way in which you perceive videogames forever. □ Ryan Butt



By earning skill points, you can learn new tricks for handling yourself better in combat.

DEUS EX		
Why we'd buy it:	Why we'd leave it:	
- Better than the old PC version	- No multiplayer	
- Breeds new intelligence in an FPS	- Graphics are occasionally drab	
- Wholly captivating		
Graphics	Great, but not mind-blowing	08
Sound	Convincing voice acting, atmospheric tunes	09
Gameplay	Easy to pick up, impossible to put down	09
Life span	So many different ways to play each level	10

PlayStation 2 VERDICT



If you were Snake you’d charm her knickers off in seconds. But you’re not, so she’s safe.

SEGA



MULTI-PLATFORM

THE TRUE MASTER
ONLY ENGAGES
THE WORTHY OPPONENT

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PlayStation 2
THE THIRD PLACE

The one true-to-life martial arts fighting game.

www.au.playstation.com/vf4



REVIEW

BLOOD OMEN 2



If you cover your eyes watching ER, this game isn't for you.



Doors will open by activating switches.

These chests hold Kain's power. Collect them to build up your health.

BLOOD OMEN 2

400 years on, Kain is back to reclaim his land. Watch out, he's thirsty...

Publisher Eidos
Developer Crystal Dynamics
Price \$99.95
Players 1
Out Now
Web Site www.legacyofkain.com
60Hz Mode No
Widescreen No
Surround Sound Yes

Back story

Based around the *Soul Reaver* 2 engine, *Blood Omen 2* has you playing as Kain, the villain from *Soul Reaver 1* and 2. Although, officially this is a sequel to 1995's *Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain* for PSone, the action-based gameplay couldn't be any more different from the original game's role-playing premise.



Even with the promise of immortality, a smart line in clothing and a moody demeanour, being one of the undead does have its disadvantages. Take

Kain, for example. Since he last appeared in *Legacy of Kain* for PSone, he's gained 400 years and has seen his once proud land destroyed. Weak and lacking much of the power he formerly commanded, it's basically back to square one for the demonic protagonist and a lengthy mission to regain supremacy once more.

Much has changed with both the plot and the visuals from the first *Kain* game. Out go the RPG elements and, instead, we welcome an arcade adventure game in the time honoured fashion. Innocent civilians and guards need to be butchered for their blood [to top up your life force] and special powers called Dark Gifts have to be earned to defeat the more difficult guards and vampire bosses of the later levels.

You begin the game with just two Dark Gifts [Rage and Mist] but, after defeating each of the many bosses, you're rewarded with their signature moves. The first boss surrenders a

Towns are filled with locals who all seem to speak Dick Van Dyke Cock-er-ney

highly useful Jump Gift, while some of the better prizes to look forward to include Possession [use the townsfolk to run errands for you] and Beserk [a frenzied attack].

BLOOD LUST

Anyone expecting a burst of originality with *Blood Omen 2* will probably be disappointed. That's not to say that this is a bad game, but everything is exactly as you'd expect - bloody huge vampires wandering around generic Gothic towns filled with locals who, oddly enough, all seem to speak Dick Van Dyke Cock-er-ney. Puzzles are sprinkled throughout the game's many levels and, bypassing originality completely, they still consist of the 'find switch to unlock door' variety, or the old chestnut 'move block to cover switch'.

Much has been made of the combat in *Blood Omen 2*. Beginning with a humble slash attack, weapons are stolen from your victims and range from a small knife to a more impressive broadsword. The basic controls allow you to slash away merrily or block your opponent's advances, but you can't help wishing that more attention had been paid in this department. All it would take to improve matters would be a couple more move variations but, instead, it's the repeated stabs of @ that will see you through. In addition, it's possible to grab your opponent by the throat and, depending on the weapon you're carrying, stab, pummel or thwack them in various parts of



All the levels in *Blood Omen 2* are beautifully designed, without exception.



This chap's a blood bank away from the romantic vampires as portrayed by Anne Rice

GIFT WRAPPED

The Dark Gifts are the backbone of the gameplay. Earned by defeating bosses, you'll need to master them quickly to succeed in *Blood Omen 2*.



Fury

Increases the strength of your attack. Not as powerful as Berserk, earned much later in the game, but not bad for starters.



Mist

Keep an eye on the ground and you'll often spot a low mist waiting across the streets. Activate stealth mode here and they won't know what hit 'em.



Jump

First you place the target, then a quick flick of the stick sends you there. Perfect for those rooftop moments when you think you've come to a dead-end.



It's not just garlic, crosses and daylight – anything can hurt a vampire in this game.



Halfway through the first boss. Flick the switches to fry him.

Even if you aren't carrying a weapon, Kain's claws make for a perfectly good attack.

Puzzles are fairly standard, with crates needing to be pushed to gain access to new areas.

their body. Unfortunately though, you feel this move has been included for graphical effect rather than a gameplay advantage.

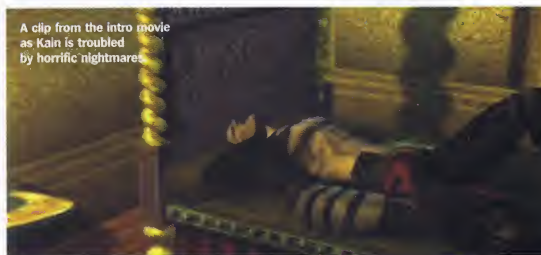
Slowdown also causes some gameplay niggles. Running through the corridors shows the graphics engine at its smoothest but there is a noticeable slurring in the frame rate when you emerge into an open arena or town square. This may just be a personal grievance and it may not bother many players, but it does affect the flow of the game and there's no real need for it with the power of today's consoles.

SUCKING GREAT!

On a more positive note though, *Blood Omen 2* is certainly enjoyable and that's surely down to the care and attention lavished on the adventuring. Rather than just casting you as a vampire lumping your way through numerous repetitive stages, Kain's quest allows you to visit locations as varied as medieval sewers and dockyard warehouses. The puzzles, although fairly unoriginal (as previously stated), are graded perfectly, and logic plays enough of a role to keep you guessing without ever being completely stumped. One of the best additions to the gameplay is the Dark Gifts – possessing civilians to do your bidding, creeping through the mist in stealth mode, summoning a Fury or Berserker attack – all these open up the game beautifully.

The AI of the townsfolk is also impressive. Wade in with fangs out and you'll miss many of the small touches that help create the atmosphere. It's more rewarding to sneak up on a couple, eavesdrop on their conversation – which can range from the banal to the comical – then butcher them mercilessly and slurp down a drop of the red stuff. Harsh, but being a vampire was

A clip from the intro movie as Kain is troubled by horrific nightmares.



never going to earn many fans.

Anyone expecting an exceptional or original title will be disappointed. There are elements in *Blood Omen 2* that you will have seen in countless other games, but that's not to say that it's without charm. The promised 30-plus hours of gameplay could prove to be the perfect antidote to the quick thrills of some of the more recent PlayStation 2 releases. □ Dean Mortlock

BLOOD OMEN 2

Why we'd buy it:

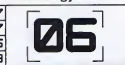
- Dripping in atmosphere
- Over 30 hours of blood-sucking gameplay
- Kain looks good in black

Why we'd leave it:

- Lacks originality
- More combat options are needed
- You hate the sight of blood

A powerful storyline is let down slightly by gameplay that offers little originality. *Blood Omen 2* is definitely enjoyable, but we were hoping to get our teeth into something juicier.

Graphics	Well-defined, but there is slowdown	07
Sound	The odd scream or two and loads of chatter	05
Gameplay	You've seen it all before	05
Life span	Plenty of game here if you have the patience	05



PlayStation 2 NERDICT

NO PAIN, NO KAIN

There are a few ways to end the lives of the poor souls who inhabit the cobbled streets of Nosgoth. Here, in no particular order, are some of the best.



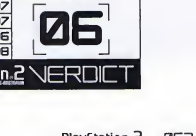
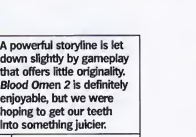
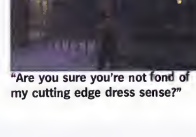
Raised by the throat, a swing of Kain's club to the knackers is sure to result in embarrassment before death.



Ah, they may try to crawl away, but a blade thrust down between the shoulders soon puts a stop to that.



The stealth move made famous by a snake of much solidity. He never even saw it coming.



REVIEW

SMASH COURT TENNIS



The cameras pan and zoom to very cinematic effect.



Success at the challenges unlocks bonus items for purchase, such as photos and player manuals.



Player animation is superbly authentic. Mmm!

SMASH COURT TENNIS

Too late for the Aussie Open but just in time for Wimbledon.

Publisher SCEA
Developer Namco
Out June
Players 1-4
Price \$99.95
Web Site
auplaystation.com
60Hz Mode yes
Widescreen No
Surround Sound No

Back story

The Smash Court Tennis series started life as a fairly gaudy representation of the sport, with cartoon characters, garishly designed courts and wacky extra items like exploding bombs during play. Smash Court 2, with Anna Kournikova, added some much needed lusty human content (grml) and this version, Pro Tournament, is actually from the arcade game of the same name.



Despite early cartoony outings affecting both character and court design on PSone, Smash Court Tennis has always made for a really good game of tennis. Now with added celebrity power, the latest in the series is boosted with the virtual presence of eight real-life star players that includes the likes of Martina Hingis and Pete Sampras.

Not quite as pretty as you might expect but offering a very subtle and deep representation of the intricacies of the game, Smash Court goes a long way to providing the perfect antidote to Dreamcast-less tennis fans. Indeed, Namco has clearly been paying very close attention to Virtua Tennis, bringing at times an almost identical representation to PS2. What the two games share, however, are varied, sometimes exquisite shots, realistic animation, and deep gameplay.

Smash Court has been out in other territories for a few months now and a lot has been said about the game's challenging AI. At OPS2 we look at it another way – it appears to cheat. With a massive leap in difficulty at the quarter-final juncture of a tournament and a seemingly preternatural ability from CPU-controlled players to accurately predict your shot and blast an unreachable response past you, a lot of players are going to feel cheated. In programming terms, this may be the best implementation of AI. In a sports game for quite a while – we're not programmers

here and so wouldn't comment – but we suspect that many gamers are going to be put off by the steep challenge.

Also, while Smash Court appears to be a simulation, there is no similarity to real life in terms of comparative skill. If you choose Sampras, for instance, at first you'll still get unreasonably and catastrophically whipped by even the fictitious players, men and women alike. By way of illustration, when we first dipped our toe in the Pro Circuit mode at OPS2, we won the first two matches without losing a single point and then, in the quarter final and corresponding quantum leap in NPC AI, were soundly thrashed, managing to salvage only one point before the long walk back to the locker room.

It's not all doom and gloom, though. If you're willing to stick with it, Smash Court can be very rewarding. There's no real necessity to play 'smart' tennis (lobbing net players, playing drop shots on baseline hitters, etc) early on, but if you want to improve your skills – and to make any progress that's absolutely essential – the game rewards you for doing so. Hit to a player's backhand and it'll often buy you a few precious milliseconds for positioning; work on your timing and you'll begin to 'wrong-foot' your opponent far more often. This is where the Training mode can really help – our concern is that a lot of gamers simply won't get that far. □ Max Everingham

HARD HITTERS

Smash Court Tennis offers eight fully-licensed players. Here are the most well known... and most tested after.



Pete Sampras

One of the most consistently brilliant players in the world, Pete Sampras is a stiff challenge when you meet him in the semi-final stage of a Pro Tournament. Has an amazing ability to score multiple aces.



Anna Kournikova

Not only is Miss Anna one of the most searched for names on the Internet, she's also a very good tennis player. Fans won't be disappointed in Smash Court's representation of both her playing style and impressive physique.

SMASH COURT TENNIS: PRO TOURNAMENT

Why we'd buy it:

- For a challenging game of tennis
- We've always envied Virtua Tennis owners
- Great in multiplayer

Why we'd leave it:

- Unbalanced difficulty levels
- Workmanlike visuals
- Some unattractive character modelling

A deep but sometimes brutally difficult tennis simulation that may deter the casual gamer.

Graphics	Not spectacular but pretty stylish	07
Sound	Very simplistic	05
Gameplay	In a word, tough	07
Life span	In multiplayer, perhaps	07

07

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

There are four major tournaments to choose from, each representing a different court surface and therefore playing method.



You begin the game equipped with two lightsaber weapons. The only real difference between them is that the blue one helps you vault up to ledges.

There's no shortage of climbing and clambering, so it's worth looking out for suitable overhangs.



Twiddle the analogue stick in a specific series of directions to achieve this snazzy power-up.

One weakness is that progression through the game feels very linear.

STAY ALERT

Be sure to keep a close eye on the cut scenes: chances are, you'll suddenly be required to hammer a specific button in order to make it safely on to the next stage of the game.

OK



Olive, dive, dive!

Don't be tempted to stray onto the subway track - every time you do a train attempts to plough into you.

OK



Dodgems

Other cut scenes see you having to dodge punches or evade enemies. Success simply means you don't die.

EOE: EVE OF EXTINCTION

SmackDown developer Yuke's wrestles with three game genres at once... and loses.

Publisher Eidos
Developer Yuke's
Price \$99.95
Players 1
Out Now
Web Site
www.gamnation.com.au
60Hz Mode No
Widescreen No
Surround Sound No

Back story

Yuke's first made a name for itself in Japan as a result of the Touken Retsuden series of wrestling games. Spotted by THQ, they were subsequently snapped up to develop the hugely successful WWF SmackDown brand, which is still the grappling game benchmark. Sadly, their ventures outside wrestling tend to be less successful, with the likes of Evil Zone and Sword Of The Berserk being average at best.



The concept of a free-roaming beat-'em-up always seems like a great idea. Yet the reality rarely lives up to expectations. Take Square's The

Bouncer, for instance. Heralded by many before its release as potentially being PS2's first 'killer app', the end result was a cumbersome experience. Sadly, the same can be said of Eve Of Extinction.

It's not for want of trying though. Under the Eve Of Extinction umbrella falls gameplay elements that cover fisticuffs, puzzles, action adventure and even platforming. Yet none of it melds to produce a satisfying gaming experience.

At the beginning of the game you're equipped with a map, two lightsaber swords (there are a further eight unlockable weapons such as axes and whips) and strict instructions to see off the inevitable slew of baddies. Despite it being a weapons-based affair, the fighting system is decidedly limited. Each saber offers only two different forms of attack, with the longer of the two also available as a sort of futuristic pole vault - essential for reaching ledges and scaling fences.

The combat side of things isn't helped either by the generic (and actually incredibly dense!) AI opponents. As per the first wave of scrolling beat-'em-ups of the Eighties, mere button bashing is enough to despatch them, thus the fighting quickly becomes repetitive and much of a chore.

The adventuring aspect of the game is better, by virtue of some impressive environments and solid level design that is in some ways reminiscent of Spider-Man on PSone. In order to pad out the gameplay there's lots of 'busywork' - much of your time is simply spent running back and forth,

collecting keys, flicking switches and darting through newly-opened doors. Unfortunately, the end result is that it all feels doze-inducingly linear.

Perhaps the best aspect of the game is the smooth inclusion of some platform-style trappings: allowing the player to clamber up buildings and swing along pipes helps give proceedings a true 3D feel. Even this is flawed, though. The camera doesn't automatically adjust in response to the direction in which you're facing. Instead, you continually have to tap **LB** in order to shift the camera. The minor advantage of being given control over the camera is more than outweighed by the sheer tedium of having to keep adjusting it in order to see where you're heading or even, in some cases, who you're fighting.

While there is the occasional good idea in evidence, the overall execution errs on the side of the decidedly average. Far from being the all-action adventure brawl-'em-up it promised, EOE is, instead, mundane and tedious. **Oliver Hurley**

EOE: EVE OF EXTINCTION

Why we'd buy it:

- Offers both action-adventuring and hand-to-hand combat
- Includes some well-realised environments
- We like our puzzles

Why we'd leave it:

- A dissatisfying hybrid of genres
- Fighting is clumsy and repetitive
- Annoying camera system

Some good ideas, but they just don't gel. The end result is a tedious, button-bashing trudge through the burnt-out shell of a great game.

Graphics	Decent environments, dodgy camera	06
Sound	Effects and music are only intermittent	04
Gameplay	Fun moments tempered by repetitiveness	05
Life span	Offers little in the way of replay value	04

PlayStation 2 **VERDICT**



Even with multiple enemies on screen at once, it takes little effort to dispense with them.

05

REVIEW

GRANDIA 2



GRANDIA II

A fantasy future with the graphics of yesteryear. This ain't so grand...

Publisher Ubi Soft
Developer GameArts
Price \$99.95
Players 1
Out Now
Web Site
www.ubisoft.com
60Hz Mode No
Widescreen No
Surround Sound No

Back story

Grandia II is the sequel to the old PSone RPG and a conversion of the very same Grandia II that appeared on the Dreamcast. Look back and there doesn't seem to be much of a difference from the original. In terms of gameplay, combat system and graphical style (cute isometric 3D), it may have looked good on PSone, but it feels technologically backward on PS2.



When will the inhabitants of fantasy realms learn? After the ultimate battle between Good and Evil, you do not seal the fallen pieces of the bad guy in various locations in the hope they won't ever be resurrected. They will always be resurrected. Your indestructible seals will break. Your powerful protective glyphs will fade. And as every fan of fantasy knows, Evil can't be fought with legions of spearmen or armies of archers. It gathers its strength slowly using spiritual possession and minions rather than masses. Thankfully, when Evil is almost ready to disease the land with new darkness, it gets defeated by a rag-tag band of adventurers who just happen to have found the only thing that can kill it. Then several hundred years pass and the cycle begins again.

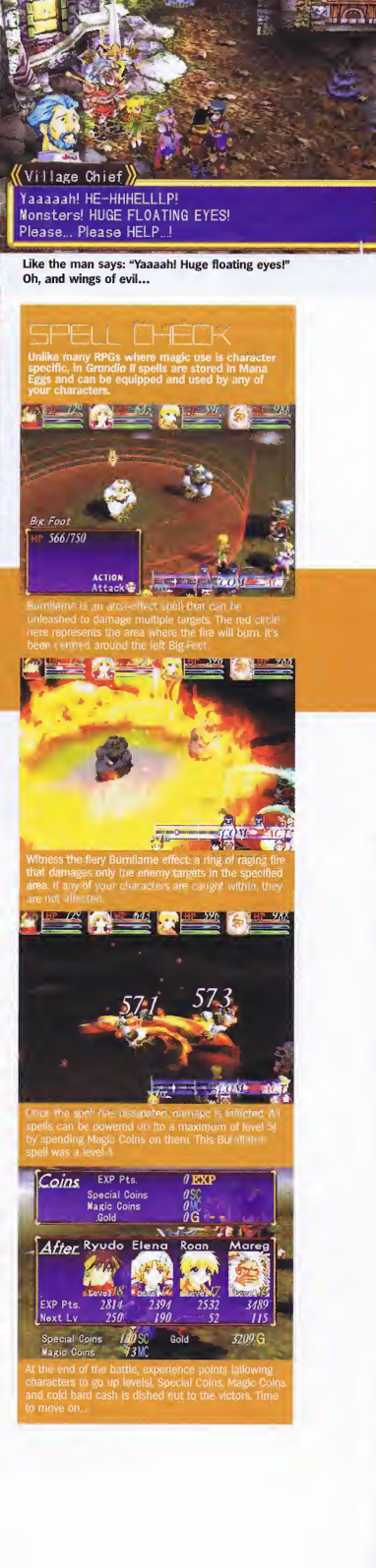
Grandia II spins another such high fantasy tale. Its central character, a swordsman named Ryudo, is the reluctant, bad-ass hero (with the obligatory hidden past). He takes on the job of escorting a young girl called Elena (infected with an evil alter-ego - Millennial to the Cathedral of

character flaws are gradually mended thanks to bouts of lightweight moralising

Granas, where it's hoped the dark taint can be purged. Granas lies far across the other side of a brightly coloured gameworld, where towns and villages nestle between badlands overrun with wandering monsters. Elena doesn't like our tactless, carefree hero at first, but warms to him as his victories in turn-based battles sand down his rough edges. For Ryudo, the journey itself is his redemption - his character flaws are gradually mended thanks to regular bouts of lightweight moralising.

Most RPGs offer little that's new. Grandia II is no exception. In fact, when you get right down to it, even the giant Final Fantasy X is the same old game dressed up with graphics to die for. There are spells of fire and ice, earth and air. Spells that speed you up, that heal hit points, and that cure confusion, poisoning and blindness. Originality is a myth. Yet while Grandia II does the same basic things as other RPGs - exploration, turn-based battling, spell-firing, item collection, stat-improvement and character jabber - it approaches some of them in a different way.

For starters, Grandia II features a pseudo real-time combat system that, while similar to classic FF melee, is different enough to make things interesting. The order of battle is determined by a time-bar. Icons on this bar represent each of the characters and the enemies they face - good guys on the bottom, bad guys on top. As the battle begins, the icons move from left to right along the bar towards a section marked COM. When an icon reaches this point a character can perform a command (attack, magic, special move





or use item). There is a brief delay while the Icon slides along to the ACT section and the pre-selected command is unleashed. As all of the icons in a battle move at different speeds, the tactical decisions you make revolve around who to attack and whether you can delay an enemy's action [see Hack 'n' Slash].

LORD OF THE MANA

Grandia II also gives you the freedom to develop certain characters at a faster rate than others. Cleverly, instead of magical ability being character-specific, spells are stored in Mana Eggs that can be swapped between characters when required. Winning a battle not only gains your characters experience points but also gold, Special Coins and Magic Coins. The gold can obviously be used to buy better weapons and armour, medicinal herbs and protective charms. Special Coins can be spent on learning and improving special moves – their availability managed by Special Points [SP]. Similarly, Magic Coins can be invested in boosting the spell power in a Mana Egg. Any character can cast a spell once it's been learned, as long as they have enough Magic Points [MP] to do so.

Then there are the graphics to consider. *Grandia II*'s cute, cartoon-style visuals hardly push the power of PS2, but there are a few notable features. The perspective is isometric, and what you can't appreciate here is that it's also fully rotatable. Unlike many RPGs, wandering monsters (giant spiders, over-sized praying mantises, day-glo dinos) are visible on the screen



A mildly devastating soap bubble attack that will send targeted nasties straight to the land of nod.



as you explore. Your choice of approach when confronting these enemies can give you an advantage in combat – sneak up from behind and you gain the Initiative, be attacked from behind and concede the first strike. You can avoid these monsters by running past them. But by missing the battles, you miss the chance to gain experience, money, SP and MP.

These features may not help you actually 'like' *Grandia II*, though. True, it does have a good stab at creating a combat system, and if you're prepared to give it a chance (say three hours) your patience is rewarded with some interesting battles. But the animated cut-scenes jar against the rudimentary quality of the isometric graphics. *Grandia II* is also unbearably slow as you wade through box-after-box of cringeworthy pulp narrative. It's playable enough, but it's also repetitive, dated and it never completely captures your imagination. □ Dean Evans

GRANDIA II

Why we'd buy it:

- It's an RPG that tries to be different
- What it lacks in beauty, it makes up for in size

Why we'd leave it:

- Dated graphics that rarely push your PS2
- A repetitive storyline... did we say that already?

Graphics

Looks like a high-res Game Boy title

Sound

All the booms and whooshes of RPG battle

Gameplay

Explore, fight, improve character...

Life span

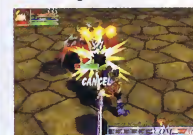
Is 'size' everything? Is it really?

HACK 'N' SLASH

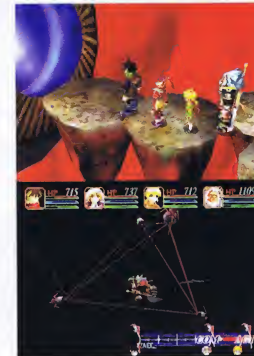
Grandia II attempts to inject a little originality into the classic RPG template by adding a pseudo real-time element to its battle system. Here's how it works:



Combat is still turn-based, but the order of battle is determined by a character's position on the time-bar. Here, against a single Gargyle, you can see that Ryudo's icon is on the bottom. When it reaches the COM section of the bar, the action pauses and a command can be entered. This command is unleashed when the icon rundles along to the ACT section.



Cleverly, by choosing to hit an enemy with a Critical strike rather than a heavy damage Combo, you can push back an enemy's icon, delaying its own attack. Similarly, if you attack an enemy when its icon is between the COM and ACT parts of the time-bar, you achieve a Counter strike that causes more damage.



From forests to hills, mines to mountains, *Grandia* is huge.

An RPG of trade-offs. A big game, but poorly visualised; interesting combat, but repetitive, rarely captivating gameplay.

05

PlayStation 2 NERDICT



Gary Neville receives a yellow card and a timely face-lift.

Don't stand there! Make the wall jump and block the shot.

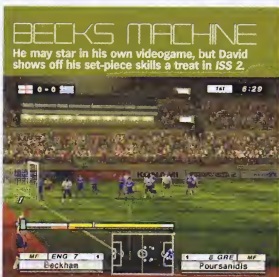
Fiddling with your tactics will pay dividends during a match.



With the keeper flailing, Rio heads home and puts England into the final.



With Thuram in close proximity it's essential to throw a dummy, make the by-line and whip the ball in at pace.



BECKS MACHINE
He may star in his own videogame, but David shows off his set-piece skills a treat in ISS 2.

Corner
Beckham lines up a corner as you adjust the height, power and swerve of his cross.



Free Kick
With the same control over the free kicks, here's your chance to relieve that moment against Greece.

Whinge
Diamond earring glinting in the sunlight and Posh simpering in the crowd, our hero moans like a child.

ISS 2

Konami's other football game, like City are Manchester's other team.

Publisher Konami
Developer Ozisoft
Out 24 May
Price \$99.95
Players 1-4
Web Site garnation.com.au
60Hz Mode No
Surround Sound No
Widescreen No

Back story

It's worth reiterating (just in case your Gran makes a hash of your birthday present) that this is the inferior arcade-style Konami soccer offering, while Pro Evolution Soccer is the outstanding simulation game from Konami's Tokyo-based development team.



Judging by our drooling over Pro Evolution Soccer, you may wonder just why you should play any other soccer videogame. Well, if you like your virtual soccer on the cheesy side, ISS 2 will be right down your flank. This arcade player displays flashes of brilliance to please everyone.

For starters, the collision animations are superb, with each challenge exacting an appropriate response from your victim. Sweep your legs wildly at their trailing peg and you'll catch it, sending your opponent careering skyward. If you win the ball, the defence-splitting one-two will have you grinning immodestly, too.

Another highlight is the commentary. Instead of a string of inane rantings, Jon Champion and camp icon Mark Lawrenson supply the chatter, gabbling appropriately and, usually, making sense. What's more, much effort has gone into generating realistic models of stars such as Davids, Klüvert, Seaman and Beckham. All good stuff.

On the down side, some major niggles mean you never feel fully in control of your players. When the ball is destined for your opponent, or a teammate, it's nigh-on impossible to make an interception. Player swapping can be nightmarish, too: to take control of a man ahead of the ball and the delay is so great you'll press **□** again toggling through your intended defender to another player. Very annoying. Almost as worrying are the ball physics. KCE OSA has largely ignored the effect of the ball's pace and a player's body position on the power of their subsequent pass. As a result, each connection is as sound as if it were made under no pressure.

That said, this is a different type of soccer game. Elements of cheeky action, such as the

over-the-top shooting animation and the goalkeeper's repertoire of parries are typical of the arcade feel. A sense of intensity is maintained by a strong imperative to attack, as pacy play complements easy passing. Sadly, most scoring chances are generated by crossing from the by-line or by lashing the ball at the keeper who inevitably spills it to your on-rushing attacker.

That's not to say the game lacks depth altogether, though. Defending is particularly satisfying as you welly the ball away like a pro. In-game management allows you to choose your route of attack, Chelsea's match announcer parps out the scorer's number and away goals are greeted with the hissing approval of your small following and the jeers of the home crowd.

Overall, ISS 2 succeeds in occasionally outclassing most soccer offerings. However, Pro Evolution Soccer also allows you to play suicidal football and lets you change the pace and spray the ball around if you prefer. Our advice: buy PES. If you've already got it, be warned, ISS 2 will only distract you for a few days. **□ Lee Hall**

ISS 2

Why we'd buy it:

- The most satisfying fouls in videogame soccer
- A decent arcade alternative to PES

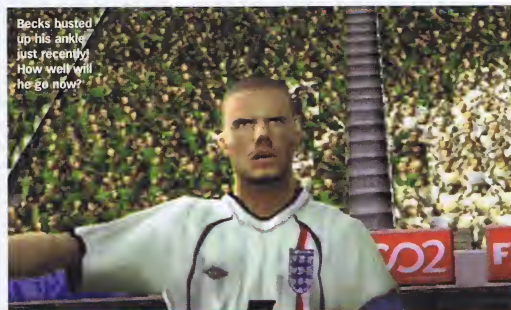
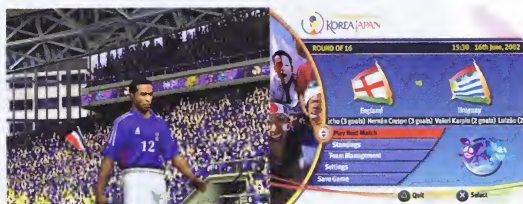
Why we'd leave it:

- You'll tire once you've mastered the basics
- The ball physics can prove frustrating
- Active player swapping could drive you mad

A solid arcade soccer game. But with Pro Evolution Soccer on the block, who needs a new kid?

Graphics	Outstanding animations but murky pitches	07
Sound	PES-beating commentary and nice effects	08
Gameplay	The action is fast, but somewhat samey	07
Life span	Once mastered, there's little draw to play on	05

PlayStation 2 NERDICT



2002 FIFA WORLD CUP

For one month every four years, even Aussies will call soccer by its proper name.

Publisher EA Sports
Developer EA
Price \$99.95
Players 1-8
Out Now
Web Site uk.worldcup.
 europe.ea.com
60Hz Mode No
Widescreen No
Surround Sound No

Back story

EA Sports has had huge success with its FIFA Soccer games, although Konami's Pro Evolution Soccer has been met with better critical acclaim. Indeed, the official France '98 World Cup games were amongst the most successful of any videogame, on any format released in that year. The development team for these games is based in Canada.



You knew it was coming so why try and avoid the issue? EA Sports never misses an opportunity to exploit a good licence and aren't about to start now. Thankfully, rather than simply tagging on a few official logos and mascots to *FIFA 2002*, we've been graced with a football game that features some genuine upgrades.

All 32 qualifying teams make an appearance, together with another eight who missed the boat the first time around. Included amongst the bonus teams is...wait for it...Australia (but sadly not Holland). So for all of you still spewing about the untimely exit of Frank Farina and the boys, you'll be pleased to know that you can now take them on a campaign for World Cup glory. Who knows, you may even get a second shot at knocking off Uruguay along the way.

Even with a total of 40 teams to select from, that doesn't leave much room for variety when compared with the almost endless list to choose from in the 'regular' *FIFA* title. That said, each country does have an extensive roster, so you'll still have the opportunity to go into manager mode and mix up the lineup to your heart's content. Play Stan Lazaridis as a Soccerroo striker!

In the same way that the marketing machine behind the real tournament has already begun focusing on the superstars of the game to flog anything and everything from soft drinks to jockstraps, so too does the electronic version differentiate the stars from the mere mortals. *2002FWC* does so by letting you know (via a star above a player and neat blur effects on movement and shots) whenever a superstar has the ball: Owen for England, Henry for France, Solksjaer for Norway, and so on. Surprisingly, only Harry Kewell was deemed worthy of superstar status for Australia, so *OPS2* suspects that the Duke may be a little pissed if word gets around.

The arcade style of gameplay is easy enough for even novices to pick up and the control system works well. All special moves are executed via the default R1 button and do indeed generate the oohs and aahs that EA Sports was hoping for. Football purists will no doubt get on their soapboxes over the fact that the special moves are too easy to execute and occur too often, but they do fit in nicely with the game's arcade feel. In an attempt to lend

the game some respectability, *2002FWC* has also finally caught up with the rest of the video game football world with the removal of auto-passing and the introduction of directional and power controlled passes. It's a very welcome feature that has been long overdue.

There are no real complaints in the graphics department, with smooth animation, accurately modelled actual stadiums in Japan and Korea, and highly detailed players (right down to Zidane's bald patch). The game features some brilliant pre-game music (performed by the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra) together with exceptional atmospheric sound and background effects that make you feel as though you're in the middle of the screaming crowd on final day. The commentary is workmanlike in its execution and overly descriptive, lacking the amusing quips and banter found in other sports titles.

The main complaints with *2002FWC* are its lack of options and limited play modes. This proves to be a major detraction over time. With only Friendly and Tournament modes to choose from, and little incentive to keep winning Cup after Cup (an All-Star team is unlocked after your first win) there just isn't enough to keep you coming back for more. Then again, football breeds rabid fanatics like no other sport and those who can't get enough of the World Cup probably won't even notice or care. ☐ **Derek Lee**

DID YOU SCORE?

EA's soccer games have been guilty for years of a major crime. It has to do with scoring and the 'money plays' that can be employed!



Players with 'stars' above their heads are more destined for great things, as they have better abilities. All players are capable of scoring, though.



If you discover one way of scoring in this game, you'll be able to repeat the process over and over again - something that gets very boring.

2002 FIFA WORLD CUP

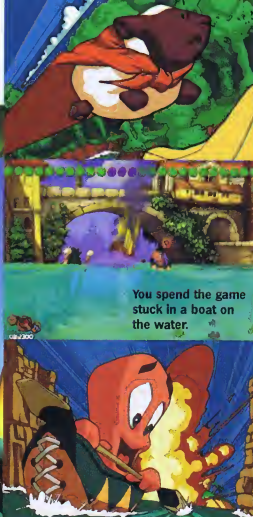
Why we'd buy it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Three words: Official Licensed Product - Star players plus new passing system - You prefer arcade over realism 	Why we'd leave it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited number of teams and modes - Surprisingly few options - Not as deep as other football titles 	A football title with all the licensing bells and whistles but lacking in options and play modes. This will be a popular seller regardless.
Graphics Nice work on stadiums and player faces	Sound Excellent crowd noise but bad commentary	08
Gameplay Arcade-based and simple controls	Life span Two game modes and only 40 teams	07

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

REVIEW

WORMS BLAST

Worms fans are likely to be more familiar with this kind of arena shot.



A narrow escape.



EH, A PUZZLE GAME?

The link with previous *Worms* games is tenuous at best, with really only the weapons in common.



Battle: Here, both parties are concentrating on knocking out their own sets of blocks before they get down too far. The aim is to match the colours of ammo and block, much like in the Puzzle Bobble games.



Weapons: Get it right and your points rack up as the corresponding blocks explode. Ah, explosions: that's more like the *Worms* games we know and love! The secret is to select the best weapon for the job.



Powerups: As you play, various items will be released from the exploding blocks and provide different enhancements. Every now and then the barrier between you opens up for a chance for some direct combat!



1 shot: In single player mode you get the ocean to yourself but, even with the added challenge of hitting the boxes with the wrong coloured ammo recolours them, the fun is short lived.

WORMS BLAST

We doubt you'll be having a blast with this game for too long.

Publisher Team 17
Developer Ubisoft
Price \$99.95
Players 1-2
Out TBA
Web Site wormsblast.team17.com
60Hz Mode No
Widescreen Yes
Surround Sound No

Back story

Created by Team 17, the same British development outfit responsible for the original *Worms*, this is the ninth release in the *Worms* 'softography' and a complete departure from the usual 'deathmatch' format where opposing teams of worms take it in turns to assault each other. The first game was released in 1994 and *Worms Blast* is not the only weird one: there was also a *Worms Pinball* released for PlayStation in 1999!



In this day and age of super consoles, cinematic-quality video, lifelike graphics, and digital sound, let's not forget that the concept behind the first video game was using a bouncing ball to break up a wall.

Also, remember that one of the most popular games of all time was based on an extremely simple, but highly addictive, concept of manipulating a series of cascading blocks of different shapes. *Worms Blast* is part Pong, part *Tetris* but, unfortunately, only partly fun.

As with all simple concepts, they're often fiendishly difficult to describe, so let's take it step by step. First, you select a character. Next, you'll find that your character is sitting in a vessel which is floating on water. Suspended above your character is a mixture of different coloured blocks encasing items which you need to retrieve. Using an assortment of weapons, the basic premise of the game is to destroy the blocks in order to release the items and powerups trapped within.

Sounds simple. The first catch is that your ammo is colour coded, which means that when it is a certain colour you can only destroy blocks of the same colour. Hit a block of a different colour and those blocks automatically change to the same colour as your ammo. As your ammo randomly changes between shots, you have to decide whether to change the colour of the blocks, or wait for the right colour. The second catch is that, on some levels, the water is gradually rising, on others the blocks are slowly dropping line by line, threatening to crush you. Sounds a bit more intriguing now, huh?

As you'd expect, the different characters have different skills. Some move more quickly in the water whilst others are more accurate with their aiming. The weapons at your disposal also have different advantages and disadvantages. For instance, the shotgun has a quicker rate of fire but is less accurate. The

bazooka is slow, but you can use it to arc shots up and over obstacles. The stick of dynamite is a good way to destroy a lot of blocks quickly, but it's on a timer and it can also accidentally destroy powerups.

Essentially, the game is based around simple concepts of aiming and logic. Single player mode is more puzzle based, where you must fire off increasingly difficult shots through gaps and at moving targets, often while the clock is ticking. Two-player mode, via a vertically split screen, plays like combat *Tetris*. You can concentrate on your side of the screen and try to destroy the blocks before you're squished. Or you could use your weapon to try and sink your opponent, or else sabotage their efforts by changing the colour of their blocks. As you'd expect with a *Worms* game, the graphics and sound are cartoon-inspired and rather plain, but still entirely fitting with the feel of the game.

The unfortunate truth about *Worms Blast* is that the simple concepts behind the gameplay take it only so far. The single player mode does have that frustratingly addictive quality where you have to keep trying until you finally clear a stage, but after you've completed it once (which doesn't take all that long), there's virtually no incentive to play it through again. The two-player game offers more life but with only three different modes, it too has a short lifespan.

Worms Blast is the type of game you'd whip out for few laughs when friends drop by. The simple concepts and controls mean anyone can quickly pick it up. When the party's over, go back to your other games. **Derek Lee**

WORMS BLAST

Why we'd buy it:

- Fun party game
- Easy for non-gamers to pick up

Why we'd leave it:

- Single player mode too short
- Gameplay quickly becomes repetitive

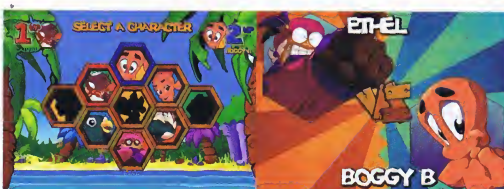
A decent enough title in the tradition of *Tetris* and *Mario Party*, but lacking in depth.

Graphics	Cartoony 2D style, but matches the game	05
Sound	Quirky little ditties and amusing effects	05
Gameplay	Easy to learn controls and devilishly addictive	06
Life span	Tolerable in short bursts only	04

06

PlayStation 2

NERDICT





REVIEW SLED STORM

BIG AIR

Sled Storm boasts some amazing leaps of faith. Here is our top five.



1. CROUCHING RIDER, HIDDEN SNOWDRIFT
Location: The Beast From The East
Vomit rating: Queasy
Features: A truly out of control, short-cut jump. Soft, virgin snow at the bottom can send you flying if you land carelessly. Watch out for objects close to track side as well.



2. FINISH LINE FLYIN'
Location: Bermuda Berg
Vomit rating: Rising bile
Features: To hit the ground and the final stretch just right, you need to ease off the throttle just before launching and angle steeply to the left. Fall to do either and you'll overshoot in spectacular style.



3. THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN FLIGHT
Location: Polarfest
Vomit rating: Fetch the bucket
Features: A spectacular trio of stepped mounds in a psychedelic ice cavern, topped off by a gut-churning drop. Go at it full tilt and try to clear the second mound entirely. If you don't keep a straight line, you'll wipe out. Badly.



4. CRASH AND BURN
Location: Rumble Rides
Vomit rating: Stand back
Features: A stunning leap over a lake of molten lava just before the finish line. It looks easy but the landing ramp is a lot further away than it looks. Better hope your boost meter isn't empty...



Those skull signs indicate a shortcut.

POSITION 2/4
 TIME 0:03.23

The trackside scenery can be very weird.

SLED STORM

Snowmobile racing goes through some BIG changes

Publisher EA Big
Developer EA
Price \$99.95
Players 1-2
Out \$99.95
Web Site www.eagames.com.au
60Hz Mode No
Widescreen Yes
Surround Sound Yes

Back story

Although SSX was spin-off label EA Sports' BIG's first game, its spiritual ancestor was a natty PSone game called Sled Storm (released in 1999). Three years on and with two SSXs and an NBA Street having established the 'BIG' philosophy in epic style, Sled Storm is back and badder than ever on PS2.



If we're really going to be fair to the PlayStation 2 version of *Sled Storm*, we need to take a bilateral approach to it and break it down into "for those gamers who've never played the original *Sled Storm* on PSone" and "for those gamers who were great fans of the original". The reason for this is BIG. Because the new incarnation of *Sled Storm* has received the BIG treatment – the outfit who brought us the amazing SSX – and the effect has been to totally transform the gaming experience. This is something you're either going to love or hate.

So, for those who've never played the original game, let's have at it. *Sled Storm* is a terrifically visceral racing experience that sticks the player astride a monstrously overpowered pair of motorised skis which you are then required to navigate around a set of increasingly chaotic, breakneck courses that owe much to the track design in SSX at the kind of velocities that make astronaut training look like a walk in the park. Hurling over deep snow, sheet ice, mad jumps and around keraazy obstacles, the game imparts a tremendous sense of speed and the impression that you're racing totally on a knife's edge, barely keeping the beast of a machine under control.

Familiar elements from the SSX stable make a welcome appearance, including markings on the snow to indicate jumps, smashable trackside signs and the boisterous, colourful, larger than life design values. Wins grant you access to a series of better sleds and also unlock extra riders, levels and the "Rival Challenge" mode that sees winner take the loser's machine. With *Sled Storm*, the emphasis lays squarely on racing rather than pulling off impressive trickery, but fans of the snowboarding game will feel right at home here.

For those who were great fans of the first *Sled Storm* game, however, OPS2 suggests that the story might be quite different. The original was an out-and-out racer and, we think, better for it. The BIG interpretation tries to work tricks more into the mix but does so unsuccessfully. For a start, you can't always be sure there's room to pull off your intended stunt. Some so-called jumps handily marked out for you with red chevrons a la SSX turn out to be not so much of a leap than a ledge, so you're mid-trick when you land and are rather unceremoniously unseated. This happens a lot.

The old *Sled Storm* truly rewarded skill. You had to know which upgrades were genuinely useful, what shortcuts you could take – or indeed were worth taking – and you had to learn to

really handle the sleds. With this version, the skill factor has been almost entirely removed, so now the racer most likely to cross the finish line first is the one who's memorised the course layouts and shortcuts, the one who takes fewer small risks (because to do so often results in a 'restart') and – thanks to inconsistent collision detection – is blessed with luck from the gods. Which isn't even accounting for the fact that the NPC AI is rigged, "catch-up" style. Also, in the first game, you didn't merely get access to better machines as you progressed, but had to judiciously choose between various upgrades to your sled, spending your race winnings wisely. Some reviewers have binged on about how this game rewards skill – we disagree at OPS2 and think if it rewarded skill, then any skillful racer should be able to pick up the game and play reasonably well from the start. That simply isn't the case.

We don't usually make reviews too personal here, but I'm going to have to admit to some bias this time. I loved the original *Sled Storm*. I loved the fact that the upgrades had distinct, tangible effects on the sleds' performance. I loved the fact that you had to drive the machines, and not just accelerate mindlessly and I loved the fact that the shortcuts, once you'd discovered them, were real shortcuts that put you ahead of the pack and brought with them a real sense of accomplishment.

Sure, the BIG makeover has resulted in a game with a bigger personality, bigger dose of gillyzy trackside architecture and bigger, splashier graphical effects. But is bigger necessarily better? ☐ Max Everingham

SLED STORM

Why we'd buy it: - We love SSX - We dig outrageous, funky extreme sports - All that power throbbing between the thighs	Why we'd leave it: - BIGger is not necessarily better - The frustration level can be high - Dodgy collision detection and catch-up AI	A reckless, hair-raising blast of racing, extravagance with a supremely challenging difficulty curve.
Graphics	Impressive, but detract a little from the racing	08
Sound	Not the SSX tour de force we might expect	06
Gameplay	Can be very frustrating	05
Life span	May quickly tire of the 'unfair' AI	05

06

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

REVIEW

DYNASTY WARRIORS 3



The game is full of fancy acrobatics.



DYNASTY WARRIORS 3

It's time for some epic button-bashing battles in ancient China...

Publisher THQ
Developer Koel
Price \$89.95
Players 1-2
Out Now
Web Site
www.thq.com.au
60Hz Mode No
Widescreen No
Surround Sound No

Back story

Koel is a relatively small software development outfit, specialising in 'ancient war time' strategy games. The only games of note to be released here have been *Kessen* and the *Dynasty Warriors* games. Other famous Koel games are *Nobunaga's Ambition* and *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. Koel is also responsible for the horse racing sim *Winning Post* (and *G1 Jockey*) and most recently, *Gitaroo Man*.



Dynasty Warriors 2 was released not long after the PS2 itself and impressed with large-scale battle scenes and charismatic characters from ancient Chinese history. *Dynasty Warriors 3* provides more of the same and, while it does have some flaws, it will provide months of entertainment for those who fall under its spell.

The opening cinematic (along with all of the game's cut scenes) is impressive but brief, leaving you with the choice of a number of gameplay modes. The main game is the Musou mode, which follows your chosen general through a series of battles. There are nine characters to choose from, representing all three sides in the long-running conflict.

For the most part, *Dynasty Warriors 3* plays like a classic arcade beat 'em up; the differences being that there are hundreds of opponents rather than just a few, and there are often multiple routes and strategies to success. Each general is capable of a basic attack, a charged attack, and a Musou (special) attack. These different attacks can be used in combos, with each character having their own special ones. You are also capable of blocking, jumping and firing arrows from first-person perspective.

While action is the main ingredient, strategy is also important, especially in Musou mode. Upon completing each battle, your performance (body count, time, enemy generals killed) is evaluated, and you gain experience that improves your luck, hit points, attack strength and musou gauge. Your regiment of bodyguards will also gain experience and their numbers will increase.

You will often need to choose when to raise your kill score by taking out as many opponents as possible and when to rush through to defeat the target general. Defeating particular enemy generals will not only give you points it will allow you to find rare items, which may aid you greatly in future conflicts. There are four weapons for each character, but the alternate ones must be found on the battlefield. Completing the Musou mode several times will unlock more characters, weapons, and movies.

The Musou mode alone should keep you off the street for weeks, but there are also Challenge and Free modes, as well as two-player action. Free mode allows you to play

a single battle while Challenge mode gives you chosen general an enemy army to defeat within a time limit and the like. Two players and their armies can face off against each other on confined battlefields, such as a bridge or courtyard. Two players can also play co-operatively, taking the part of generals on the same side of the battle.

While the graphics are usually excellent, with attractive character designs and large numbers of characters onscreen at once, there are occasional problems with slow-down and distance pop-up. This is especially noticeable in two-player split screen when the colourful musou attacks are used. The glitches don't get in the way of the single player game much, but the camera angles can be quite painful at times.

Another problem is that while the battle sound effects are passable, the soundtrack is horrific, featuring energetic guitar-driven rock tunes that poorly suit the setting. Thankfully, you can turn it off but then the endless sounds of battle (cries, yells, thuds, etc) will probably annoy before too long. These issues should not distract from your overall enjoyment, but they certainly don't add to it.

While it's no great leap forward from *Dynasty Warrior 2*, fans of that game will need no encouragement to play this. In fact, it's certainly a worthy sequel. If you're after some intense, large-scale battles then be warned – this may keep you chained to your PS2 for weeks on end. □ Stuart Clarke

FAMILY HEROES



The characters you will fight and/or play in *Dynasty Warriors 3* (such as Cao Cao, Liu Bei, Sun Jian and Lu Bu) all come from Luo Guanzhong's epic tale 'Romance of the Three Kingdoms' and will be familiar to anyone who has played the *Kessen* games or *Dynasty Warriors 2* in fact. Japanese developer, Koel has been making games about their exploits for years now. The story concerns the conflict in China around two thousand years ago as three kingdoms – Wu, Wei and Shu – battle for supremacy. While some of the storyline is based on actual historical events, the magical abilities of the generals have obviously been exaggerated for effect (and good gameplay).



DYNASTY WARRIORS 3

Why we'd buy it:

- It will last for ages, lots of replay value
- Satisfying button-bashing violence
- The mass battles look awesome

Why we'd leave it:

- It's tough – not for wimps!
- Some graphical glitches
- Can get fairly repetitive

Dynasty Warriors 3 provides some intense mass battle action, and will last quite a while.

Graphics	Lots of characters onscreen at once	2/5
Sound	Decent FX, but horrible guitar soundtrack	2/5
Gameplay	Fast and furious combat with some strategy	2/5
Life span	Heaps to unlock and multiplayer adds life	2/5



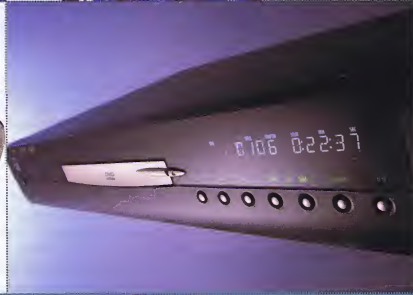
PlayStation 2 NERDIC

AUSTRALIAN

TOMORROW'S TECHNOLOGY TODAY

★★★★★ THE MYRIS R100 (SEMI-CONDUCTOR & INTELLIGENT MOTORING)

T3



IN THIS ISSUE:

TRUE BLUE: IS BLU-RAY REALLY SET TO REPLACE DVD?

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REVIEW

G1 JOCKEY



Springing out of the stalls sharply - it's the key to winning races.



He looks like a horse's arse, he smells like a horse's arse...



Please let us know if these statistics mean anything to you.



Sadly you can't put the other horses off by barging into them.

G1 JOCKEY

The results from Randwick just in...

Publisher THQ
Developer KOEI
Price \$99.95
Out Now
Web Site www.thq.com
Players 1 - 8
60Hz Mode No
Widescreen No
Surround Sound No

Back story

Horse racing sims have long been popular in Japan. Incredibly popular in fact. Hirokyu Sonobe's Derby Stollon series is one of the most profitable franchises in the Orient, with the original selling nearly two million units. It's not just on consoles either, whole arcades are devoted to virtual gambling games and there are plentiful online competitors for PC titles. Even RPG stalwart Square has got in on the act, producing a Final Fantasy offshoot called Chocobo Stollon. Sheesh!



Just when you thought there were no sports left to get the videogame treatment, along trots an entirely new breed of simulation. Despite being a firm favourite in Japan, this is the first time a publisher has stuck its neck out and brought a console horse racing sim to Australian shores. Part strategy, part puzzler, part arcade racer, G1 Jockey saddles you with the task of becoming one of the world's top riders. It may sound less appealing than a stretch in the Bangkok Hilton but if you can get past the fact that it's, well, a horse racing game, there's a complex and testing (if somewhat dull) game on offer.

You start out as a complete novice jockey and the first task is to choose which of the many stables you would like to ride for. After the stable's owner/trainer pops up to welcome you into the fold, it's off to the first meeting where you're greeted with a barrage of incomprehensible stats and figures. Rewind, go to the Tutorial mode and your agent will attempt to explain what the hell is going on. Now only mildly perplexed, you can return to begin the season.

The game essentially boils down to solving a series of mathematical equations. You'll be offered the chance to ride in various races each week and you need to pick the right horse for the right race then suss out what tactics to employ according to the horse's stamina, mentality, speed, etc. Success breeds success and as you pile up the wins, your standing in the racing community goes up. Trainers will offer you more rides on stronger horses in higher class races, hence your chance of piling up the winnings improves.

The actual racing itself uses a simplistic control system and is similarly tactical to the pre-race shenanigans. There are loads of factors to take into account with both course and horse, but timing is the real key - knowing when to hit the button to leap from the stalls, when to push your horse, when to rein back and so on.

The in-race animations are decent if you can bear to stare at horse arse for hours on end, but unless you're Scoble Breasley or a die-hard racing fan, the game simply isn't involving enough. Ploughing through statistics to learn about the thousands of different horses wears thin very quickly. The inclusion of a gambling option might have spiced things up a bit, or perhaps the game could have done with some Gran Turismo-style upgrading. A new noseband here, a set of hydraulic legs there...

We can't see horse racing games catching on over here but who knows, perhaps it's worth a few bucks on the nose? **Nick Ellis**

G1 JOCKEY

Why we'd buy it:
- We've never played anything quite like it
- It's a complex brain-teaser, if you like that sort of thing

Why we'd leave it:
- It's horse racing
- Having to stare at plump horse rump for hours
- Ploughing through reams of statistics is pretty dreary

Horse racing comes to PS2 at a steady canter rather than a gallop. A Melbourne Cup for the grey cells, this is nothing if not intriguing.

Graphics	Static presentation, decent race animations	05
Sound	Awful arcade music and no spoken dialogue	03
Gameplay	Relies too heavily on statistical bewailing	05
Life span	Get hooked and you'll be playing for long time	07

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

STABLE GUYS

The majority of the 'action' takes place away from the racetrack and you'll meet dozens of horse folk during your career. Each person has plenty to say that you'll need to take on board and although there's no spoken dialogue, the pop-up text box system is slick and efficient. Here's a few of the characters you'll encounter.



By the way, you're on Fairfax Hill at Maiden S aren't you? I heard that Private Storm from the Dean Ridley stables is in that race too. A bit young, but that one is still pretty stiff competition.

The Agent

Robert Nakata, presumably no relation to the AS Roma footballer, is one smooth cookie and a bloke you really need to listen to. He's always on hand to give you tips about horses, whether it's one to watch out for in the future or how to handle one of your current rides. Paying attention to what he tells you means you're statistically better equipped to take on the field.



Congratulations on your first win, NELLIS. That was a pretty good ride. I expect I'll be asking you to ride for us again sometime, and I hope you'll say yes.

The Trainer

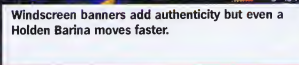
Every stable has its own trainer, usually a middle-aged man in a sports jacket or suit. While you belong to one stable, you're free to ride for other trainers should they ask you. Impress these folks with your jockeying skills and they'll be much more inclined to offer you rides or even make you stable jockey for a particular horse. After every race the trainer is on hand to offer his congratulations or rag on you.



Well there NELLIS. You won at last. I bet that's a load off your mind. It certainly was a long wait, for me too, but I'm sure you can make up for lost time now.

The Rival

Initially, you're competing with 66 other jockeys for the title of Rookie Of The Year. A few of them, like Mr Lance Hamilton here, will pop up occasionally to offer grudging compliments on a race well won. You can help but feel their tone is slightly sarcastic though and the only way to rub their noses in the matter is to beat them on the track.



SUPER TRUCKS

Lots of trucks, but we're not sure where the super ones are.

Publisher Jester Interactive
Developer Jester Interactive
Out TBA
Players 1-2
Price \$99.95
Web Site www.gamnation.com.au
60Hz Mode yes
Widescreen yes
Surround Sound No



Red lorry, yellow lorry, red lorry, yellow lorry. There is nothing more annoying than a six-year-old reciting this tongue twister over and over while stuck in a traffic jam in the rain. It does, however, set the tone for what is one of the most repetitive and futile games to come to PS2 in recent months. We have nothing against articulated vehicles per se, but didn't it strike anyone during the making of this game that driving sluggish trucks around race tracks might not give you quite the same adrenaline rush as a Ferrari F355 going around Suzuka? Fact: trucks move slower than most other vehicles, therefore it is vital to communicate the difference in speed – or the intricacies of handling such vehicles – to make it stand out from other faster-paced racing titles. Jester Interactive has clearly failed to deliver in this department.

Back story

Jester Interactive is better known for MTV Music Generator. While that title brought a dose of novel innovation to PS2, Jester's decision to secure the rights to the Super Trucks licence seems a little misguided. It's certainly a gap in the market, but a bland interpretation is unlikely to convert anyone to the niche sport.

In general, the handling of the trucks lacks sophistication. While three types can be selected (Race, Drift and User) each merely alters the turning angle parameter before a skid is produced. It's pretty basic stuff. Select Race handling and you have to slow down for a corner earlier but your cab is generally stable. Choose Drift and you can perform Ridge Racer-style powerslides (albeit in slow motion) to increase the angle of turning. As is the standard in racing games, a variety of options are available. You can select a vehicle type (predictably, some have higher top speeds but

poor handling, while others might have faster acceleration but lower top speeds) and automatic or manual gears. But, even when later vehicles are unlocked, the sluggishness never abates.

Visually, the graphics just about do their job and the frame rate is reasonably smooth with only an intermittent amount of slowdown. Occasional damage occurs on vehicles and it's good to see other competitors making unforced errors. There are rain effects on some levels but it's always prescribed and only serves to slow down the 'action' further.

In terms of structure, there's also little to crow about. Yes, it has an Arcade mode. Yes, it has a Championship mode. Yes, it has a split-screen two-player option. Go through the Arcade mode and you get ever stricter time gates to beat. Go through Championship mode and you get an increasingly harder series of races to win.

By now you have probably got the picture. Super Trucks does everything you expect of a videogame but does nothing you wouldn't expect. It's bland, bland entertainment. It's so average that it's worse than average. The game's lack of ambition is stifling, and any excitement you think would come from driving a super-powered truck around various race tracks has been sucked out by the insipid game design. Even fans of Eurosport's Super Trucks coverage will find this mildly engaging at best. **Mark Walbank**

SUPER TRUCKS

Why we'd buy it:

- It's completely inoffensive
- Muffled truck fans might like it
- Bland but not terrible

Why we'd leave it:

- Lacks any kind of spark
- Sluggish handling
- Extremely unambitious game design

Graphics

Competent but nothing special

Sound

Pathetic engine sounds lack grunt

Gameplay

Mostly sleep inducing

Life span

Plenty to keep masochists going

A full-on simulation of truck racing would have been welcome, but this arcade interpretation lacks sophistication and is just too tiresome.

04

PlayStation 2 VERDICT

REVIEW SUPER TRUCKS

HAZARD WARNING

There's not a great deal in Super Trucks to spice up the bland racing. It's not as if you can really admire the other vehicles, so here's a rundown of the main hazards to avoid.



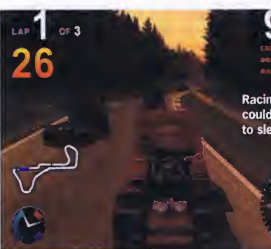
Always watch out for the grass verge. If you select a truck with poor handling, even the slightest movement off the track can spin you out of the race.



Harass your opponents too much and the race officials will become very irate. A black flag gives you a short time penalty.



On selected races the rain comes down to spoil visibility and seriously hamper handling. But the crummy rain effects only serve to make the races even more pedestrian.



Racing at dusk could put you to sleep.



Although the draw distance is impressive, the plodding sense of speed never sets the pulse racing. Why play this when you can get Gran Turismo?



The inclusion of a CD radio might have improved things.

REVIEW

BARBARIAN



This game is reminiscent of Arnie playing as Conan!



The levels sets this game apart.



Warriors have differing strengths and weaknesses.

BARBARIAN

If you want some roleplaying with your fighting action, better check out *Barbarian*...

Publisher Titus
Developer Interplay
Price \$89.95
Players 1-4
Out 16 June
Web Site www.titusgames.com
60Hz Mode No
Widescreen No
Surround Sound No

Back story

Commodore 64 owners will fondly remember the *Barbarian* game released on that system. Indeed, *OPS2* was hoping that the game was given a new lease of life here, but the two games share nothing except for their titles. This PS2 version marks the first time that this genre has been tackled for PlayStation owners. Other platforms have seen various attempts with varying success of free roaming fighters.



The PlayStation 2 has had surprisingly few good fighting games, with launch title *Tekken Tag Tournament* remaining the best available for far too long. The arrival of *Virtua Fighter 4* is of course a much welcomed event, but it may overshadow *Barbarian*, another fight game contender which tries hard to bring some innovation into one-on-one biffs.

What *Barbarian* does is try to blend fighting with RPG-like character progression and branching storylines. The gameplay itself is similar to Capcom's *Powerstone* on the Dreamcast, featuring multi-level 3D arenas with lots of interactive objects able to be thrown about or swung as weapons.

That all sounds decent in theory and, apart from some niggling control and AI issues, it turns out fairly decent in practice. The game opens with a brief but impressive cinematic giving you a glimpse of all the fighters in action. You will uncover the stories of the individual fighters as you play them during the course of the game, but the underlying plot is that the Heroes of *Barbarian* have waged war since the dawn of time, ravaging the Earth under a madness forged by the evil Zaugg.

While you can choose to dive straight in, it is advised to complete the Training section, as there's lots to learn apart from the basic attack moves. Each player also has magic attacks and can pick up objects lying around the environment and use them as weapons. As you gain more power, you can even do things like uproot trees to use against your opponent.

Each of the 10 fighters has a different quest and your actions will impact on the story as there are a total of 300 different branches, depending on success or failure in fights and your upgrade choices. Success in fights leads to a better, but perhaps tougher, scenario and gives you the ability to upgrade your character in either physical or magical attacks, speed and lift ability.



FROM UGLY TO UGLIER

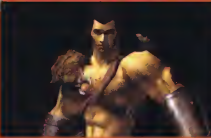
There isn't much good - it's all bad and ugly when it comes to *Barbarian*!



Makes Clinton from *Temptation Island* look like a midget.



Anyone remember Michael J Fox in *Teen Wolf*? He was a wimp!



The only *Barbarian* cast member that could get a girl...



Two of the nastiest girls you'll ever come across.



Scariest than your dad in a pair of trunks on Christmas day!



THIS BLOKE HAS HIS FACE COVERED UP FOR A REASON. HE'S HIDEOUS!

Unfortunately, given that there's an unusual emphasis on the storyline for a fighting game, it's disappointing that the story is communicated between levels by scrolling text with a boring voiceover. The characters never come to life (most are just standard male/female *Conan the Barbarian* archetypes) and it's hard to feel much identification with them and their quests.

The 12 arenas you fight in however are quite impressive; all forbidding locations like the sewer, ruins, prison and a fortress, and are made up of several large sub-levels. When a character falls over the edge of a parapet or goes through a door, the action moves with it seamlessly. The fighting moves generally look good, and there are some flashy special moves thrown in for good measure.

The slightly imprecise control, especially when jumping and trying to face your opponent, lets *Barbarian* down though. The AI is also problematic - and you will find your computer opponents annoyingly relentless until you stumble on basic moves that you can endlessly repeat for success without them coming up with a counter plan.

There is a four-player multiplayer mode but it didn't seem to work in the version that *OPS2* played. So it is uncertain whether four players will be able to join in at once or whether two players can fight each other and two characters be controlled by the CPU.

Barbarian certainly won't outsell *Virtua Fighter 4*, nor does it outshine that game in any way. But perhaps it deserves points for trying. **Stuart Clarke**

BARBARIAN

Why we'd buy it:

- It's fun throwing rocks and trees at opponents
- Lots of replay value with branching storylines
- Innovative mix of fighting and RPG

Why we'd leave it:

- Imprecise controls and uneven AI
- Not as polished as it should have been
- *Virtua Fighter 4* is better

While *Barbarian* makes a good effort and is quite innovative, it falls short of greatness. Get *Virtua Fighter 4* or wait the long hours for *Tekken 4* instead.

Graphics	Large, multi-level brooding environments	08
Sound	Average sound FX	05
Gameplay	Innovative but there are control problems	08
Life span	Branching story provides much replay value	08



PlayStation 2 **NERDICT**



CONFLICT ZONE

Smile as you pull that trigger – you could be live on CNN.

Publisher Ubi Soft
Developer MASA
Price \$59.95
Players 1
Out Now
Web Site
conflictzone.ubi.com/home.htm
60Hz Mode No
Widescreen No
Surround Sound No

Back story

A PC version of this *Command & Conquer* clone landed on the PC in June of last year. Receiving only mild praise at best, it would appear that it's found a more welcome home on PS2, where a lack of competition in the real-time strategy game department should ensure a more appreciative audience.



Oh, how times have changed. In the past, a real-time strategy game had all the political correctness of Jim Davidson. If you saw the enemy, you shot him. Now, in today's highly sensitive political climate, things are different. If you see a soldier on the opposing side you have to ask the UN if you can shoot him. After days of discussion, the UN says "no".

Enter *Conflict Zone* – a game that bears the hallmarks of a decade's worth of these softly-softly influences very proudly. It's a real-time strategy wargame – *Command & Conquer* in 3D, if you will. You skip lightly over a well-defined and suitably war-torn location, deploying troops, building bases and destroying anyone wearing a different colour uniform – all in a TV-friendly fashion, of course. Unlike other wargames, the media in *Conflict Zone* plays an important role as the war unfolds. In order that your forces are viewed in the correct light on CNN, you have to appease the foreign press. Fail to do so and your finances will be cut which means less money for troops and equipment. So if you have to kill the enemy, at least do it politely.

Set over a whopping 17 stages across the globe, *Conflict Zone* is surely the first real-time strategy game that doesn't rely solely on military success for world domination. However there are more similarities between this game and the classic C&C than just the cosmetic ones. The gameplay is split up into missions, where you can either choose to fight for the perceived good guys (ICP) or the bad guys (GHOST). Both sides offer a totally different style of gameplay: while the ICP concentrate on keeping the media happy, the gung-ho GHOST side couldn't care less. Whichever you control, you ultimately send tiny troops and tanks into the fray, keeping track of your tactics via a handy battle map in the corner of the screen.

There are a lot of good things to be said about *Conflict Zone*. What was, in essence, a fairly routine real-time strategy game on the PC now stands out on PlayStation 2 due to the distinct lack of competition in the genre. The missions are varied and original, while good tactical awareness is needed to win both the conflict itself and the praise of the media – essential for victory on most levels. On the flipside, you may feel that you've seen its like before. Apart from some well-defined landscapes and the odd FMV sequence, there's little to distinguish *Conflict Zone* from any of the previous real-time strategy games we've all seen, played and kicked the ass of before.

Overall, *Conflict Zone* will never be a *Command & Conquer* beater. Then again, few games could actually claim to be that. But the slowly unravelling plot, user-friendly controls and media-sensitive gameplay are more likely to win friends than lose them. Given time and patience, fans of the genre will unearth an enjoyable game that rewards perseverance with clever artificial intelligence and an absorbing strategic experience. Just one thing, though: overseas, this is a budget title. Why didn't that happen here? □ Dean Mortlock

CONFLICT ZONE

Why we'd buy it:

- Fine war simulation
- Interesting slant on established genre
- Plenty of missions to wade through

Why we'd leave it:

- Could have done more with PS2's power
- Controls get fiddly in the heat of battle

Solid and functional, *Conflict Zone* does little you haven't seen before in an RTS, although media intrusion makes for a novel twist.

Graphics	Functional rather than outstanding	05
Sound	Explosions and occasional speech samples	05
Gameplay	Well-designed and enjoyable	07
Life span	17 stages to work through	06

PlayStation 2 **VERDICT**

06

WHAT THE PAPERS SAY

Worldwide success and support in today's conflicts hinges on the way your campaign is reported in the media. *Conflict Zone* reflects this wonderfully.



The general will bark out the orders at the start of a mission, with a stern warning to avoid any 'collateral damage' under the ever watchful gaze of the world's cameras.

You may feel proud as you vanquish the rebels from their town stronghold, but if you've caused too many civilian casualties, your enemies can and will use this against you.



Watch out for a surprise ambush when you enter a seemingly deserted town.

REVIEW

LMA MANAGER 2002



The 3D games are your chance to sit back and gloat or get stuck in.



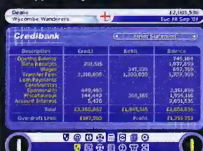
The bigger the stadium, the higher the revenue.

You can leave training to your assistant manager. Or not.



BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

In addition to the glamorous squad management and the 3D matches, *LMA Manager 2002* also gives you the opportunity to run the entire club.



Finance: Life can be tough down in the lower divisions. Money is tight. Fortunately, bank loans are available to clubs allowing a significant cash injection for the purchase of a player or to invest in stadium improvements.



Stadium: To maximise revenues and increase capacity, you can improve and upgrade your stadium, adding more stand space, executive boxes or even relocating and constructing a brand new, 30,000-seater ground.



Youth Team: Each club in *LMA Manager 2002* operates a youth team policy. Your assistant manager will keep an eye on the lads here and inform you when any of them begin to show first team potential. When they do, snap them up.



Sponsors: A commercial manager can be hired to take care of getting shirt sponsorship and filling your ground's advertising hoardings. But unless he's a talented man, you may find it's better to do this yourself.

Publisher Codemasters
Developer Codemasters
Price \$99.95
Players 1-2
Out TBA
Web Site www.codemasters.com
60Hz Mode No
Widescreen No
Surround Sound No

Back story

The *LMA Manager* series gets its name from the League Managers Association, an organisation founded to provide collective representation for all Premiership and football league managers in the same way the PFA looks after the welfare of players. *LMA Manager 2002* is the first in the series to appear on PS2, following *LMA Manager* and *LMA Manager 2001* on PSone.



Soccer. The beautiful game. A contest of strength and skill, of stamina and ability. A sport where, as Ron Atkinson once put it, "either side could win, or it could be a draw." With the continued absence of *Championship Manager* on PS2 (it needs that hard drive) console owners must look to the alternatives. Who will win the 'Best Soccer Management Game on PS2' cup?

Unarguably the slickest and most playable game of its kind on PSone, *LMA Manager 2002* stakes a strong claim for achieving the same on PS2. You can choose to take control of a club in one of 16 divisions in six European leagues: England, Scotland, France, Germany, Italy or Spain. And once in the hot seat, you get to fine tune your team's tactics, conduct training sessions and sift through a transfer market that features 722 clubs and 17,000 players from 28 different countries. *LMA Manager 2002* is vast. Whether you want to guide Stockport County into the playoffs or take Real Madrid to European Cup glory, this is a game that has months of gameplay in it.

What the *LMA* series has always done well is make the multiple menus, stats, facts and figures console-friendly. There are eight main menu options (which you can scroll between using the **[Left]** and **[Right]** buttons), each of which has a layer of sub-menus (perused using **[Left]** and **[Right]**). Between them, you can control all areas of your chosen club, from the core squad management tasks to hiring and firing staff, arranging sponsorship deals and expanding the stadium capacity. Cleverly, you can be as hands-on as you like. Can't be bothered to sort out the pitch advertising? Hire a commercial manager to do it for you. Don't have time to renegotiate player contracts? Let your assistant manager take care of it.

The key to success in *LMA Manager 2002* is having an understanding of how the different elements of the game affect each other. Players, for example, are rated in 13 different areas, from tackling and passing to temperament and stamina. They also have specialist skills: penalty taker, free-kick specialist, etc. As for tactics, you can use one of several pre-set formations or create a custom shape.

COME ON YOU REDS!

LMA Manager 2002 also features a 3D match feature and it's far from just a gimmick. As the match unfolds, you can make adjustments to your strategy by shouting preset commands at your players, or pause the game to dip back into the tactics

menu. If you don't want to spend five minutes watching each match, the PS2 can generate a result based on the interaction of stats alone. While this is quicker, the disadvantage is that you have no control over how the match plays out and no chance to personally make tactical changes or substitutions. Post match, there's a highlights package (presented by Gary Lineker) where key moments are replayed and analysed.

Even with all the many features mentioned here, we're only scratching the surface of the game. For soccer fans, *LMA Manager 2002*'s gameplay will be simply irresistible. It's slow and involving, a giant sporting puzzle that requires a constantly changing combination of players and tactics to solve it.

The game isn't perfect, though. The power-bar method of measuring a player's abilities isn't as precise as a black-and-white stat, so it's often difficult to see whether one player is better than another. The 3D matches are time-consuming and obviously not up to FIFA standards – there can be some wayward passing and kooky AI decisions. But, on the whole, watching the games is entertaining and a nice breather from the in-depth menus and their endless stat-crammed tables.

The best thing about *LMA Manager 2002* is that you just can't stop playing it. You can spend hours simply fiddling with the menus, tweaking this and adjusting that. Best of all, perhaps, there's no easy way to win and no one way to play. As John Motson once babbled, "the unexpected is always likely to happen." □ **Dean Evans**

LMA MANAGER 2002

Why we'd buy it:

- A very slick, very playable soccer management game
- Vast in scope – six leagues, 17,000 players
- Hugely challenging

Graphics

Mostly menus, but nice 3D match playback

Sound

A few beeps, Gary Lineker and Alan Hansen

Gameplay

Often irresistible. Immersive management

Life span

Infinitely replayable

Why we'd leave it:

- We haven't scouted the opposition yet

Sets the bar high for any soccer management games to follow. It will be a tough one to beat.



PlayStation 2 NERDICT



THE HOOBS

Sony signals a new, educational role for PSone that's totally Hoobacious!

Publisher SCEE
Developer Runecraft/Jim Henson Interactive
Price \$59.95 with free soft toy
Players 1
Out June
Web Site www.hoobnet.com
60Hz Mode No
Widescreen No
Surround Sound No

Back story
BAFTA award winning Jim Henson's *The Hoobs* is the largest ever single UK pre-school TV commission, with 250 half-hour shows. It is based on a widely-accepted early learning curriculum framework, focusing upon the five key aspects of children's development and learning. The Hoobs franchise now reaches 40 territories worldwide and that includes us, with shows airing weekdays on ABC.



If there was any doubt over Sony's intentions towards the PSone's future software library, there won't be after you see this game. Following hot on the heels of the dismal *Alfred Chicken* comes *The Hoobs*, a game based on the 'edutainment' kids' program brought over from the UK's BBC and now showing on ABC. Happily, though, it's a whole lot better than its fowl predecessor.

An invention of the prolific Jim Henson studios, *The Hoobs* is aimed squarely at pre-schoolers and follows the principles of a proper school curriculum. Wandering our planet in their psychedelic 'Hoobmobile' like a trio of alien Goodies, the Hoobs (Iver, Tula and Groove) hail from Hoobland (funnily enough) and are on a quest to discover as much about the world they're visiting as possible. Tasked each day with finding the answer to a question posed by their boss, Hubba Hubba, back on their home planet, the three Hoobs recruit Earth children (who they call 'Tiddypeeps') to aid them. And it's your job to seek them out and get the info. The information gathered is then compiled into a massive database called the Hoobopaedia as well as being broadcast via the Hoobnet. Phew! If you're not a little preschool kid or a parent with one, this is probably where you'll stop reading.

For anyone left (hi parents!), it has to be said that *The Hoobs* achieves what it sets out to do with some class. Totally faithful to the format of the television show, kid gamers are treated to an interactive version of the action and, once the TV-style introductions are over, can choose between five different 'locations' (Jungle, Arctic, and so forth) to visit and explore. Finding themselves in control of the fourth Hoob, Roma the roving reporter, against crisp, primary-coloured pre-rendered backgrounds, the task is to approach the various items scattered around and, pressing the action button, learn about

them all. Everything discovered and loaded into the Hoobopaedia represents a step closer to the solution.

Once again retrieving our test 5-year old from the broom cupboard and dusting him off, it was immediately evident that Sony has hit the nail on the head in terms of instant appeal. Being such a faithful representation of the TV show, the first 15 minutes or so provide a very absorbing experience. Each location throws up a couple of mini games, such as Snap, and these definitely proved most entertaining. The tiddypeeps you play against make mistakes just like you (or your child) does, which is a very big plus. On returning to the Hoobmobile HQ, the delighted Hoobs also congratulate you (the essential 'reward' principle).

Sadly, the joy is short lived. After no more than about 20 minutes, our test subject lost all interest in the game, stating (in his own way) that there was simply no compelling reason to continue. This is not to say that *The Hoobs* isn't fun, however. On the contrary, the game is a colourful, friendly, refreshingly positive way of providing entertainment while teaching young children useful information. Maybe it's just that it needs to be treated in exactly the same manner as the TV programme – which is to say in short, enjoyable, 20-minute bursts. □ Max Everingham

IT'S A CLASSIC!

The mini-games are triggered as the kids you encounter issue challenges. All the old favourites make an appearance and are quite fun.



Snap: The kid you play against is as likely to make mistakes as you are. This gives a real sense of accomplishment when you get it right.



Frogger: Just get to the other side to collect the logs. It looks simple but, in fact, can present quite a challenge as the floating debris submerges.

PS one™

THE HOOBS

Why we'd buy it:

- Our kid likes the show
- We believe games can be educational AND fun
- The mini-games are classics

Why we'd leave it:

- We, or our kids, are over 7 years old
- The novelty wears off quickly
- We don't know any pre-schoolers

An interactive version of the excellent kids' TV show that will keep your little ones entertained - and at a budget price.

Graphics	Simple, pre-rendered stuff	06
Sound	Very faithful to the TV programme	08
Gameplay	Educational and fun	09
Life span	Limited, after the first play through	05



PlayStation 2 VERDICT



The guy in the background is your boss, Hubba Hubba.

The locations are littered with objects for you to examine.

Edited by: Richie Young

media

DVD / INTERNET / PRINT / MUSIC

When you're done playing, here's what you might like to watch, read and listen to...

Text: Richie Young/Ben Walsh/Eddie Robson/Lee Hart/Rachel Phillips/Christian House

Jim couldn't stand the smell of his grandmother's slippers.



AMERICAN PIE 2

TRISTAR / \$39.95 / OUT NOW

The boys are back in town after returning home for the summer holidays. At the end of the last film the lads had received their induction into the amorous arena. And this hasn't been brushed under the carpet. Jim (Biggs) is still a dead loss in the sack, mourning over the loss of pneumatic Nadia (Shannon Elizabeth) and confused over his cherry-popping encounter with flute-wielding nympho Michelle (Alyson Hannigan). Oz (Klein) is still with his true love Heather (Mena Suvari), who subsequently heads off for a European educational vacation. Kev (Thomas Ian Nicholas) remains in love with his first-time encounter, Vicky (Tara Reid), who now just wants to be friends. Finch (Eddie Kaye Thomas) is still lusting after Stifler's mum. And Stifler himself (Seann William Scott), is still a bombastic, crude, girl-mashing, IQ-depleted yob.

What follows is all pretty straightforward but it falls short of delivering as much laughter as the original. Unfortunately, the quality of the acting can't live up to the comedy. Chris Klein, who was so very good in *Election*, gives a poor performance.

The real shining lights of this 'young Hollywood' ensemble are Eugene Levy (Jim's dad), who again shows how appallingly embarrassing fathers can be, Alyson Hannigan as Michelle, Jim's musical mistress and Jason Biggs (Jim) himself.

At the end of the day this remains a cinematic sheep in wolf's clothing. It may seem like it's smutty, risqué and dangerous but at the core it's really a cuddly, love-is-the-answer memo. CH

Features: The Behind the Scenes 'The Baking of *American*

Pie 2 must have seemed like a good idea at the time. It's a fast-cut, MTV-style round up of the characters, stars, backstory, locations, crew and the main gags. And yet, almost miraculously, it manages to avoid any decent insights into the film-making process. Director Rogers and Eddie Kaye Thomas provide amusing solo commentaries. We also have cast members Mena Suvari, Jason Biggs and Thomas Ian Nicholas, who get together to give what could just be the commentary equivalent of dope talk – dull, repetitive and boring. Most of the time their squealing hysterical laughter and inane observations merge together like an audio mess.

Verdict: Unfortunately, *American Pie 2* was a tad disappointing despite its genuine attempts at 'outdoing' itself. **7/10**



I know your body dudes. Dumb and dumber get shafted by their girlfriends.

DUDE WHERE'S MY CAR

FOX / \$39.95 / OUT NOW

Film: Two "stoner dudes" wake up with absolutely no recollection of where they went, what they did or who they did it with [or to] – do indeed spend the duration of the film trying to work out what happened the night before, looking for a car and calling each other "dude". This is a constant, and unrelenting theme.

One plus is that there are babes. Then there are more babes. The humour is set somewhere around the level of a whoopie cushion inflated with actual facts; and it really isn't that funny. You know it isn't. But after a while, it wanes you down... then out come the alien-hunting cult members in suits made of bubble wrap. Watch it and you may

just happen to be able to appreciate the [small] genius that is there.

This movie was tailored for the PG-13 rating US box offices, meaning that a bunch of drug references and almost all the implied ones and babe-centred sauciness was removed. We wished that they hadn't. Because, apart from a few cheap gags this flick could have done with some saving. **RP Features:** Even the director and two leads have to get pissed to sit through this film again – and their increasingly shouty track suggests Scott and Kutcher aren't too far removed from their characters after all. **Verdict:** Yes kids, it's all about the dope. Gaspi 6/10

Tom Green has more shock value than ever in his very own project *Freddy Got Fingered*.



FREDDY GOT FINGERED

FOX / \$39.95 / OUT NOW

Film: Last year, seemingly without exception, critics proclaimed *Freddy Got Fingered* to be the worst film ever made. Now that's a strong statement, and we can think of several worse films. *Supergirl*, for example, *Striptease*, *True Lies* or *Up Close and Personal*.

Certainly, Tom Green isn't to everybody's taste, and this is him all the way. He's the director, co-writer and star and, like him, *Freddy Got Fingered* is very odd and gross. Tom goes to a stud farm and masturbates a horse. Tom swings a baby around his head by its umbilical cord. Tom runs around wearing a flayed deer carcass and so on.

That should give you some idea of how you'll take this film, and easily offended types

shouldn't even begin to imagine it. But if you laughed at *Weekend At Bernie's*, it may be for you. Make no mistake, this isn't what you'd call "good" in any accepted sense.

Some bits are cringeworthy, others fall completely flat and Green has his limitations as a director [the lighting is poor throughout]. It is, however, a true original, and in a surreal, sick and twisted way, some bits are funny. **ER Features:** There's a four minute-long featurette. Tom presents the insider's view on his magnum opus. As you'd expect, it's idiosyncratic. Six deleted scenes, trailer, TV spots and filmographies round it all out. **Verdict:** You never know though, you might just be in the mood. 4/10



Despite its low profile, *Monkeybone* will visually impress.

MONKEYBONE

FOX / \$39.95 / OUT NOW

Film: When cartoonist Stu Miley [Fraser] falls into a coma, he finds himself in a fantasy limbo land called Downtown. Here, his real-world cartoon creation, the mischievous Monkeybone [voiced by John Turturro], steals his pass back to earth, possesses his body and creates havoc with people's nightmares.

From the director of *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, this is an interesting but odd mismatch of ideas. The Downtown scenes are brilliant, with great stop-animation, CGI and crazy costumes, but most of the rest is predictable adult-kids' stuff – Fraser monkeying about in a man-possessed-by-psychotic chimp kind of way.

But even during those sequences things seem oddly macabre, especially when Stu returns to earth in the body of a broken-

necked athlete's corpse [with organs falling out all over the place] to try and put things right. Somehow, it doesn't quite gel. **RL Features:** Insightful. It shows how much technical faff goes into something like this.

The director, Henry Selick, talks us through in his deadpan [well, boring] tone. A shaky start gives way to some interesting insights when he moves up a gear and starts on the animated, clever part of the movie. You wonder how much better this would have been before exec producer Chris Columbus got his Hollywood mitts on it. With 11 extended scenes, you get to see how heavily this film was messed about with.

Verdict: The reasons why it failed are obvious, but the tech wizardry is worth watching. 7/10



Morgan doesn't do his otherwise fine career justice in this stinker.

ALONG CAME A SPIDER

PARAMOUNT / \$39.95 / JUNE 7

Film: Ex district police detective and famous forensic psychologist Dr Cross [Morgan Freeman] is still cut up about his ex-partner and her untimely demise in the line of duty. It was eight months ago but this is the movies – the arena of hard-boiled private eyes and cynically violent anti-hero cops such as *Dirty Harry*.

Marlowe and Harry didn't wallow about, harping on about lost partners. They shrugged their way shoulders and moved on with a quick shot of bourbon. However, in these therapy-obsessed days our Hollywood cops are sensitive and can't "forget" themselves.

Along Came A Spider is the second film based on James Patterson's Alex Cross detective books, following the moderately

watchable *Kiss The Girls*, starring the beautiful Ashley Judd.

This isn't even badly scripted. It is just desperately lacking in suspense. It doesn't have any *Die-Hard* style action to compensate for the unfathomable plot and makes crucial errors: replacing Judd with Monica Potter [she belongs in a hair commercial]. The twist is ludicrous and is not executed with near enough gusto as it was intended. **BW**

Features: The making of *Along Came a Spider* featurette sees everyone involved in this "making of" is reading from an autocue. It's like watching a corporate video and lacks one interesting insight. Yawn.

Verdict: A poorly drawn out thriller that could have been so much more. 6/10



TOP 9 TV SERIES DVDS

Fawcety Towers

BBC
Film: The funniest sitcom ever. **Fact:** Based on a cantankerous hotel owner who John Cleese encountered while filming with the Pythons, Basil Fawlty is a comic masterpiece. Constantly scheming, always failing miserably, it's almost painful to watch his petty dreams being shattered in ever more calamitous, hilarious ways. **Features:** Unseen Footage. Interviews. Commentary.

The Simpsons: Season One

Fox
Film: The first season of the world's greatest animated sitcom can't quite match the magic of what would follow (both the animation and the scripts aren't of the current standard) but as the foundation for all the subsequent genius, this is essential stuff. **Features:** Commentaries. Outtakes. Simpsons' shorts.

South Park Series 4

Warner
Film: A fantastic season for the swears cartoon kids, largely thanks to the introduction of the endearing (and totally hilarious) wheelchair-bound Timmy. Or "TIMMY" as the character himself would put it. **Features:** None.

Hitch-hikers Guide to the Galaxy

Roadshow
Film: Based on the late Douglas Adams' sci-fi comedy classic and

originally broadcast on radio this is the story of a painfully ordinary man Arthur Dent, who gets rescued from Earth seconds before it's bulldozed by Vogons to make way for a Space Bypass. He teams up with alien Ford Prefect and a two-headed egotist called Zaphod Beeblebrox and together they uncover the terrible, but very silly, secret behind Life, the Universe and Everything. **Features:** Making of. Deleted Scenes. Featurette. Peter Jones Introduction. Interviews.

Buffy The Vampire Slayer: Season Two

Buena Vista
Film: The best season so far in the adventures of the sexy, monster-battling schoolgirl. Features great vampire duo Spike and Drusilla as the main villains, plus the dramatic series finale where Angel turns bad and is dispatched to hell by the heartbroken Buffy. **Features:** Three Featurettes. Commentaries. Stills Gallery.

The Sopranos: Season One

Warner
Film: The opening salvo of the landmark gangster show introduces us to Tony Soprano, head of a New Jersey Mafia family as well as his own dysfunctional nuclear family. Expertly switching between light-hearted banter and brutal violence, this is gripping, epoch-making television. **Features:** Five-part documentary. Music Video.

Angel

Fox
Film: Angel suffered in its early days with comparisons to Buffy the Vampire Slayer. Spinning-off from a series loved for its clever balance of fun and fear, frights and froth, Angel came across as much darker, less amusing. By the end of the first series though this cultured series started finding its own distinct place in the world. The lead character (David Boreanaz) stepped out of the shadows and felt able to stop taking himself so seriously. **Features:** Commentary. Deleted Scenes. Behind the scenes. Cast biographies.

The West Wing: Series One (out in July)

Warner
Film: Following the trials and tribulations of Martin Sheen's Democratic President, this White House-set drama is a funny, prescient and, above all, intelligent look at one man's responsibility to serve both his country and his family. Television at its best. **Features:** Interviews.

The X-Files: Season 4

Warner
Film: Arguably the conspiracy-fuelled show's pivotal season. This delves deeper into the backgrounds of the lead characters and we also find out the history of the sinister Cigarette-Smoking Man. Away from the main series' mythology, there's the wonderfully gory, almost-banned Home episode. **Features:** Featurette. Interviews. Deleted scenes.

» DVD REVIEWS

John and Catherine enjoyed watching Julia try to act.



AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS

COLUMBIA TRISTAR / \$34.95 / OUT NOW

Film: On the brink of a bitter divorce, movie stars Gwen (Catherine Zeta-Jones) and Eddie (John Cusack) are persuaded to play happy families at a press junket to promote their new movie. The trouble is, Gwen is a temperamental diva and Eddie's a hopeless neurotic falling in love with Gwen's sister Kiki (Julia Roberts) who used to be a bloater but now looks like Julia Roberts. So it's up to publicist Lee (Billy Crystal) to hide the truth from the media while keeping the peace between the duelling stars.

A lightweight farce written by Billy Crystal (which probably explains why he gets all the best lines), there's an irritating smugness here that always seems to crop up when Hollywood has a laugh at its own expense. The all-star cast is given very little to do while Dr Crystal wears a smile of utterly soulless professionalism. **LH**
Features: Just five banal deleted scenes with optional director's commentary. **Verdict:** Tedious, anodyne, by-the-numbers Hollywood satire. **4/10**

"I used to love the smell of napalm in the morning. Now I prefer a good whiff of aloe vera."



APOCALYPSE NOW REDUX

BUENA VISTA / \$34.95 / OUT NOW

Film: Released in 1979, Francis Ford Coppola's hallucinogenic Vietnam opus follows Captain Willard (Martin Sheen) as he travels upriver to "terminate with extreme prejudice" loose cannon Colonel Kurtz (Marlon Brando), who has developed a messiah complex and abandoned the US army to fight the war his way. Now, 23 years later, Coppola and Editor Walter Murch have taken a fresh look at this masterpiece and added almost an hour of deleted footage. The reinstated material includes a jokey addition to the "I love the smell of napalm in the morning" scene, with Willard and his crew nicking Colonel

Kilgore's surfboard. And the ethereal French Plantation sequence has Willard being lectured on colonialism in Vietnam by the mysterious inhabitants. While the original release remains Coppola's preferred cut, *Redux* is a longer, slower and more complex riff. An enduring classic in either form, only time will decide which is the definitive version. **LH**
Features: Absolutely no extras, sadly. The inclusion of legendary Making Of, *Hearts Of Darkness* would've been fantastic. **Verdict:** An extra hour of one of the greatest films ever made. **10/10**

WORDS: RICHIE YOUNG

BRITNEY SPEARS

Currently doing the rounds in Australia to promote her first movie, *Crossroads*, we tracked 'Brit-brit' down to chat about her forthcoming dance game. And we didn't even have to wait an hour.

Curriculum Vitae

Name: Britney Spears
 Nickname: Brit Brit, or Brit
 Job title: Singer
 Nationality: American
 Date of birth: 02/12/1981
 Place of birth: Kentwood, Louisiana, USA
 Significant dates:
 1992 Won a coveted place in Disney's Mickey Mouse Club.
 1999 On cover of *Rolling Stone*, April issue
 1999 Britney's debut single, *Baby One More Time*, goes straight to Number 1 on the *Billboard* charts.
 2000 Hosted the 2000 *Billboard* Music Awards
 2001 Apparent change in direction signalled by debut of 3rd album, *I'm a Slave 4 U*, at 2001 MTV Video Music Awards
 2002 Movie debut with *Crossroads*
 Favourite games: Her own game and sports titles
 Favourite music: Michael Jackson, Whitney Houston & Mariah Carey
 Favourite films: *My Best Friend's Wedding*, *Steel Magnolias*



What's Britney's Dance Beat, all about?

The theme of the game is to help me get ready for my upcoming tour. I want you to audition, showing off your hottest moves to earn your place up on stage with me. Along the way you can unlock tons of features and even compete with a friend to see who has the right moves.

Was this your choice of genre and, if so, why?

Yeah, I loved the idea I wanted my fans to experience exactly what it is like for me on tour, on stage performing, and also to let them get a glimpse into my life with behind-the-scenes footage.

How many dance moves are featured in the game?

I'm not sure of the exact number, but the game is made up of the actual choreography that I use on stage. The moves come straight from my tour and videos. THQ and I wanted to make the game 100 percent realistic.

Are the game moves easy to pick up if you are not a Britney fan?

That's what makes the game so great. You can make the game as easy or hard as you like. And anyone can learn how to play.

Do the games contain mini-games within to keep players entertained?

You can unlock exclusive behind-the-scenes concert footage and tour clips, and you can even control the camera angles.

First-person Immersive Video system - a technology that combines video footage from many different cameras to create 3-D environments. How does this work?

Cameras were set up on the edges of my tour stage to capture what happened during a performance. Players will control these cameras to zoom in, out, and around the performers on stage.

It has been reported that entertainment elements that have never been seen before will be employed in your videogame. Is this true?

Yeah, if you keep in sync with the music you'll collect photos and exclusive videos. And, having music videos and concert scenes playing in the background is a new feature.

The games industry is dominated by kids and youth culture, which is your biggest

target market. Do you feel that you would like to move away from this audience?

My fans are the best in the world. They are who helped me get to where I am today and they are the reason that I love what I do. I hope that they stay with me as I grow and mature as an artist, and that I pick up new fans along the way.

Plenty of people would love to star in their own videogame. Have you got any special requests that you'll be putting forward for your game?

I wanted my game to most importantly be fun. It was also important to me to have the game be true to my real life, from my costumes to my dance moves, and THQ has done that.

What is it about these new games that you think will make them stand apart from other games available?

You can sing along, you can watch with friends, and the best part is that you can dance on a dance pad. Plus, I'm with you throughout the whole game!

This is your first foray in the interactive entertainment industry. Do you play video games yourself?

Oh yeah, I play Tetris on my Game Boy when I'm travelling and my sister, Jamie Lynn, and I sometimes play games on my PS2 at home.

If so, what is your favourite video game to date - not including your own, of course?

Next to my game, I'd have to say I love all the sports games. Basketball is probably my favourite.

With the recent release of NSYNC Hotline Fantasy Phone for the PC, do you see more and more pop icons moving into the interactive entertainment industry?

I think this move is the beginning of many and I'm happy to be a part of it.

The release of 'Slave 4 U' sees you appealing to a mature audience. Can you comment?

The "Slave 4 U" video is a part of a natural progression as I get older, but in no way should alienate my younger fans.

Crossroads is now in cinemas across Australia. Was your move into the games industry the logical next step?

I am growing as an artist and trying out new things, so this was just another part of that.

Where would you like to go next?

I'd love to make more movies. The whole process was totally cool.



postal

This month includes: *old blokes still play games, FPS 101 and some editor-sniping*

THE LETTERS ARE FLOODING IN NOW SO KEEP THEM COMING! IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO ASK OR SAY, WRITE TO US AT OPS2@DERWENTHOWARD.COM.AU OR SEND SMALL MAIL TO OPS2, DERWENT HOWARD PTY. LTD, PO BOX 1037, BONDI JUNCTION, NSW 1555. THE WINNER OF THE SIR LETER EACH ISSUE GETS A GAME - A GOOD GAME - OF OUR CHOOSING. JUST REMEMBER: WE WANT INTELLIGENT, INFORMED LETTERS AND COMMENTS PLEASE. NO FLAMING, NO 'MY CONSOLES BETTER THAN YOURS' STUFF, NO 'WHEN IS GAME XXX OUT?', ETC. AND FOR MERCY'S SAKE, USE THE SPELLCHECKER IF YOU SEND YOUR LETTER BY EMAIL - THEN WE MIGHT, TOO, RESERVE THE RIGHT TO TRUNCATE, HACK AND SLASH YOUR LETTER SEEMINGLY AT RANDOM.



STAR LETTER

There are quite a few people who consider video game consoles like the PS2 to contribute to anti-social isolationism; an escape from reality at the expense of 'real' social activity. The thinking goes that you plug yourself into a machine and neglect or avoid the formation of healthy relationships with other human beings. While I agree that gaming is a form of escape - and everyone needs a good release of tension that everyday life can produce - I think that gaming can actually assist or increase social interaction, especially between generations.

I am in my 30s and I have a 15 year old nephew. Normally, besides kicking a ball around together, we'd have nothing in common and leave each other be. However, the PS2 has enabled us to comfortably interact with each other about a variety of things because we have a common enjoyment of gaming and because we can 'escape' together playing multiplayer games. In any friendship you need common interests, especially so if you are from different generations. With my father-in-law I have footy and with my nephew I

have gaming. Instead of creating isolation, gaming has given us a platform on which to socialise, and not only about games. Now a quick question: I really enjoy your magazine and have been a subscriber for some months but wonder why many games that have already been released (eg. Pirates, Jedi Starfighter) have not been reviewed, even in a smaller article? While interviews with game-makers are interesting, I'd rather have all the games reviewed! Thanks,

David Hilton Toowoomba, QLD.

You make a very good point about the social aspects of gaming, David. While no substitute for getting outside and having a run around on the field or beach, playing a sports game on PS2 can teach plenty of good lessons - such as the value of teamwork - and it's not always easy to gather 10 mates for an impromptu kickabout, either.

We love the fact that you've found a way of making the PlayStation 2 a social, rather than anti-social, tool, so have a free game on us.

As for your question, both games you mention are reviewed in Issue 02. Often, it's simply a matter of when we receive the code from the publishers.

A1

Hey guys. I am just writing to congratulate you on the new format. I think it's fantastic and the new review system is A1. I now never buy a new game unless it's received at least an 8 in your review section, so keep up the good work. Thanks heaps,

Blair Rathmann, via email

That's what we're here for, Blair. Remember, though, if you're a fan of the genre, there are some perfectly good games scoring 6 or 7, too.

TELLIN' IT LIKE IT IS

I think your mag is great. I particularly like the way you will mercilessly 'can' a game that you think is crap. You don't often find such honest critiques in gaming magazines. I also like the broad range of games reviewed, for many mags tend to review games obviously aimed at the younger market. As an older gamer (43), I believe it

is the game that has some depth of story and character that has the most appeal to players of my age group. And there are a lot of us out there - let's face it, we are the only ones with the money to buy these things! Games like MGS are the type that one can fully immerse oneself into and live vicariously through the hero's exploits. Games such as the Tomb Raider series also have a universal appeal and obvious appeal to guys like me! What does Angelina see in Billy Bob? Go figure! I find it somewhat frustrating when I go to the shelves to select a game and find an absolute proliferation of certain types of games. For example, racing car games. How many ways can you drive around a racing car track? Once you have done it in one game, it will be pretty much the same experience in the next racing game. I just don't get it, but they are obviously popular. Enough about that; I was somewhat amused to read in your postal section the

following, "And for mercy's sake, use the spellchecker". I suspect that sometimes the spellchecker wasn't working properly during the making of your mag. Get your editor to have a closer look.

Aside from that, love the mag and keep up the good work

Lance M. via email

Not sure we agree with you about racing games, Lance, but thanks for the kind words about our 'no punches pulled' approach to reviews. There are quite a few important differences between the racing in, say, World Rally Championship, Loony Tunes: Space Race, Wipeout: Fusion and V8 Supercars Race Driver, for example. And point taken about the spelling, sorry but they were typos, not spelling mistakes! - Ed

GETTING STUCK IN

Hi. I love the new mag, and thanks for the chips, key ring, etc in April's Issue. Let's talk about first person shooters. They're great but they've been done to death and then done again. They're all the same: one man against an army or terrorist group. With today's 'super consoles', this tried and tested way of making an FPS is boring and old-fashioned. I don't know if any of you have played Medal of Honor: Allied Assault on PC but it hints at the way a FPS should be. The Omaha Beach landing was the overwhelming favourite mission in an Internet poll. Why? because it gives you the feeling of being in a massive battle, a sense of increased danger and is simply more fun. Listen up developers: the key to making a great and original FPS is to tone down the one man against the world missions and include more MOH:FL-type missions!

Jim, NSW, via email

Yeah, we know MOH:FL and love it for similar reasons, Jim (see cover) The good news is, it's coming to PS2 and there's a preview this issue.

DIAL 000

Hey guys, let me just start off saying your first issue was incredible. Being a fan of Sega's Virtua fighter series I was amazed by just how much detail and effort you put into this preview. But the main reason I have written to you is to thank you so much for reviewing State Of Emergency. I was about to buy the game, then I read your review on it and you gave it a 6/10. I thought about it and I ended up borrowing it from my local video store, and when I played it I looked back at your magazine and everything you wrote about it was absolutely true. Like the reviewer said, "It's all over very quickly". So I thank the

reviewer and your mag for letting me realise that the game just wasn't for me. Thanks a lot guys; surely the best PlayStation magazine in Australia and it was just the first issue, I'm sure it will be bigger than the previous official magazine.

Michael Yassin via email

Thanks yourself! It's always good to hear that we've saved a reader 100 bucks by avoiding a game that wasn't for him/her. Some games are only ever going to appeal to a certain taste, mindset or even age group and it's our job to point that out.

BACK TO THE DARK AGES

As an older reader (physically 32, but mentally...?) I just thought I would give my 'two bobs worth' on gaming passion from an aging enthusiast. For the younger readers, two bob (or 20c as it was in my time) was exactly how much it cost to play Space Invaders when it first came out around 1980 - yes I'm that old! It wasn't long till I realised that video games were really cool and I was hooked, spending LOTS of time at the local arcade. I couldn't believe it when eventually I could play my very own video game at home...Tennis! It was black and white, had two rectangular 'rackets' and a bouncing white ball, so not quite Smash Court Tennis Pro.

Home gaming went through many phases from Vic 20, Commodore 64, Amigas 500 and 1200, to my first PlayStation console. My PlayStation survived many years and much gaming until it finally packed it in while having just one more go of Gran Turismo late one evening. With a bit of age has come moderation and other interests, such as women! My PC was aging and not very social, so towards the end of last year I went to the 'Third Place' and purchased a PlayStation 2 and Gran Turismo 3. WOW! Life is good! My magic moment from the last week was playing Resident Evil: Code Veronica X while nursing my one-week-old baby girl on my lap! Now there's something you don't see every day. So from this aging gamer I am glad to have seen the beginnings of video games, I'm really enjoying the present, and the future is looking sweet indeed! Long live the PlayStation!

Peter, Brisbane, QLD via email

Some of us here at OPS2 remember the first ever arcade game unit, too, Peter, so you're not alone! We sometimes think it's a shame many gamers have no real idea of what's gone before and, consequently, how far we've come. If cars had evolved at the same pace, we'd all be in those flying vehicles out of The Fifth Element by now.

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HARDCORE

Tips, tactics, tricks, cheats. Want to rip your new games to shreds? Welcome to the section that's strictly for the Hardcore...



We have a complete walkthrough this month for all who wimps out there who can't deal with the zombie hordes in *Resident Evil* without a little help. Bless. Then we kick off the tips section by showing you how to best kick some ass in *Eve of Extinction*, *Maximo*, *Legacy of Kain: Blood Omen 2* and *Quake III: Revolution*. But there are hints here whatever your favourite genre, be it sports, adventure, rhythm, fighting or even getting really, really upset driving your Simpsonmobile around. That last one's more for light relief than serious game busting, but we think you might need a bit of a laugh after you've dragged your tired and battered virtual body through the Umbrella-controlled island compound in *Code Veronica*, eh?

ME

Max Everingham
HardCore Editor

WRITE IN!

Stuck? Frustrated? About to slam your Dual Shock 2 through the TV screen? Then write to HardCore. We'll do our best to unearth codes, secrets, walkthroughs or advice for just about any game you want. So, if you need a hand, just pick up that pen or keyboard and write to me, Max Everingham c/o HardCore, *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine*, PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction NSW 2022. Galactic laserpost to: OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au

RESIDENT EVIL - CODE VERONICA

In a special compact, easy to digest form we bring you the definitive guide to busting open all those puzzles and kicking the hellish undead Umbrella spawn back where it came from.

As promised in last month's issue, here we can finally present the definitive guide to the most intense *Resident Evil* instalment to date. If you are still falling victim to the vile clutches of Umbrella's hellish creations then this walkthrough tells you how to dish out some hard justice and navigate your way through those dimly-lit, creature-infested corridors. So get ready for serious mutant mashing!

[MAP 1] CLAIRE'S CELL

■ **Items:** Green Herb, Handgun Bullets, Knife
You're controlling Claire. Equip the Cigarette Lighter to see into the shadows. You meet Rodrigo and he sends you on your way. Get the Herb, Bullets (floor) and Knife (desk).

[M1] HALL

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets, Ink Ribbons
■ **Special Interest:** Typewriter
Grab hold of the Ink Ribbons and Handgun Bullets. Save the game here as a precaution and head upstairs for more action.

[M2] GRAVEYARD

■ **Monsters:** Zombies
■ **Special Interest:** Suitcase
Make a note for later on of the Suitcase falling during the cut-scene. Zombies start to attack, and you must avoid them or dispatch them with the Knife - you're better off just legging it. Run through the door opposite to get out.

[M2] COURTYARD

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets
■ **Items:** Suitcase
■ **Monsters:** Five zombies
There's a cut-scene where you meet Steve Burnside. The Handgun comes to you automatically, while Bullets are on the corpse. Exit through the only door available but make note of the other one. Eventually, you'll have to place a Medallion in it to unlock the gate.

[M2] INNER PRISON

■ **Items:** Green Herb
Walk up onto the wooden deck, grab the Green Herb, then enter the door you can see nearby.

[M2] MESS HALL

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets, Green Herb
■ **Monsters:** Three zombies
■ **Special Interest:** Map of prison
Kill the zombies. Locate the over-perchous Herb, Bullets, and Map. Go through the door to the right of where you enter.

[M2] SLEEPING AREA

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets, Dual Auto Pistols
■ **Monsters:** Zombies
Out-scene - then the zombies attack! One drops two Automatic Pistols. Take them to the right. In the shower: Leave the way you came in, run around the building, and exit by the far door.

[M2] OUTER LAB AREA

■ **Monsters:** Three zombies
■ **Special Interest:** Garage Door
Waste the uncaged zombies. The garage won't open yet so enter the lab.

[M2] LABORATORY

■ **Items:** First Aid Spray, Grenade Flame Rounds, Grenade Acid Rounds
■ **Special Interest:** 3D Copier
Enter the metal detector and deposit metal objects into a security box. Run down the hall. Grab the Grenades and First Aid Spray. Place them in the security box at the opposite end of hall. Note the 3D Copier - it can make a replica of anything. Exit through the door near the second metal detector.

[M2] COMMUNICATIONS ROOM

■ **Items:** Medallion
■ **Special Interest:** Power Switch
Out-scene. Grab the Medallion from the desk. Flip the wall switch to activate the Garage Door. Leave the lab area, but put the Medallion into the 3D Copier for safekeeping. It's metal and won't pass through the detector.

[M2] OUTER LAB AREA

■ **Items:** Fire Extinguisher, Gate Key
■ **Monsters:** Five zombies
■ **Special Interest:** Guillotine, Locked Door
Zombies attack! There's an oil barrel in the garage, so shoot it to blow up the zombies. Get the Fire Extinguisher from the garage and enter the cage. Find a Gate Key on the guillotine. Note the locked door that needs a shield-shaped item to access. Go to the graveyard and put out the fire blocking the Suitcase. Dogs attack in the Inner Prison area, so use the Gate Key on the fence door.

[M2] GRAVEYARD

■ **Items:** Suitcase
■ **Monsters:** Five zombies
Kill the zombies and extinguish the fire. Grab the Suitcase and examine it in your inventory. It contains a TG-01 (plastic lump). Now go back to the lab.

[M2] LABORATORY

■ **Items:** Plastic Medallion
■ **Monsters:** Three zombies
Place the TG-01 in the 3D copier and replicate the Medallion in plastic. Three zombies wander in but you have no weapons so avoid them. Grab the Bullets from the security box when you leave. Important: take the empty Fire Extinguisher with you. If you can't bring it, at least remember where you left it. Go back to the Prison Courtyard.

[M2] PRISON COURTYARD

■ **Monsters:** Three zombies
Avoid or kill the zombies, as you prefer, and use the Plastic Medallion on the main doors to open them.

[M3] IRON BRIDGE

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets, Two Green Herbs
Go around the Jeep via the catwalk on the left-hand side. On the bridge's other side, grab the Bullets from the Jeep's passenger seat and the Herbs on the far side of the bridge. A fire blocks you; push a crate over it to put it out. Now get on the crate, then go upstairs.

[M3] THE PASSAGE

■ **Monsters:** Three zombies

Kill the zombies. From here you can go one of two ways: forward to the Palace, or right to the Military Training Facility. We'll make our way to the Palace first. We'd rather live it up...

[M4] PALACE COURTYARD

■ **Items:** Submarine Medal, Green Herb
■ **Monsters:** Three dogs
Kill the dogs and discover a flashing green Submarine Medal on the ground. Now run upstairs and grab the Herb. Go back down and through the door on the opposite side of where you entered. Now head downstairs.

[M4] JETTY

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets, Arrows
■ **Special Interest:** Map, Control Panel
Grab the Arrows off the barrel, pull the Map and Handgun Bullets from the small room under the stairs. Make note of the Control Panel - you'll need a ship's steering wheel to activate it. Run back to the Palace courtyard and in via the main doors.

[M4] PALACE FOYER

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets
■ **Special Interest:** Access Computer
A computer at the desk asks for a code that you don't yet have. Grab the Bullets, run up the stairs on the right and into the only door available on the landing.

[M5] OFFICE

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets, Ink Ribbons, Green Herb, Umbrella ID Card
■ **Special Interest:** Typewriter, Storage Box, Locked Door
Use the Storage Box to put away anything non-essential in the near future. Push a small table aside near the locked door; the Umbrella ID Card is beneath it. Flip it over to see password: NTC0394. Also note the locked door with no keyhole, and the gold plaque on the door with two slots to place in Gold Lugers. Leave the office and run back downstairs. Enter to the right of the huge, main entrance.

[M4] LAVATORY

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets, First Aid Spray, Suitcase
■ **Monsters:** Three bats
Aim upwards for your first bat encounter. Get the Spray (ink). Bullets (stall door) and Suitcase. It's locked, so put it in the storage box upstairs.

[M4] FOYER

Type NTC0394 into the computer to unlock the double doors.

[M4] HALLWAY

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets, Red Herb
■ **Monsters:** Three zombies
Kill the zombies, then run to the end of the hall. Now enter through the door.

[M4] LOUNGE

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets, Ship's Steering Wheel
■ **Special Interest:** Two Gold Lugers

Grab the Bullets and inspect the display case with the flashing blue light to uncover a secret alcove. Grab the Ship's Steering Wheel inside and note the two Gold Lugers on the wall (don't remove them, or the room fills with poisoned gas). Run back to the foyer where you hear Steve yelling for help. The idiot has grabbed the golden guns and has locked himself in. Solve a puzzle to free him - the answer is Button C, then Button E. Steve escapes with the Lugers, but won't give them to you until you replace them with something else. Leave the Palace and run back to the Jetty. Use the Ship's Steering Wheel on the control panel to raise the Submarine from the water.

[M6] SUBMARINE

■ **Items:** Watchpack
This submarine is more like an elevator; it only goes up and down. Grab the Watchpack. It allows you to carry two extra items and access the switch on the control panel to dive. Leave the sub and enter the underwater passageway; exit via the far door.

[M6] AIRPORT OFFICE

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets, Ink Ribbons
■ **Monsters:** Three zombies
Kill the zombies! Grab the Bullets and Ribbons. There are two doors, one near an aquarium and one behind the receptionist's desk. Exit through the door behind the desk, then cross the bridge and head through the door on the far side.

[M7] CARGO ROOM

■ **Items:** ID Card, Arrows
■ **Monsters:** Five zombies
There's a button on the wall to raise the main elevator which is blocked by a box. Take the small elevator to the control room; you can access a crane here to move the box. Ride back down, press the button and a cargo elevator will rise with five zombies. Kill 'em, grab the Arrows and ID Card from the elevator, then head all the way back up to the Palace. After that, go through to the Military Training Facility.

[M7] MILITARY TRAINING FACILITY (MTF)

■ **Items:** Arrows
■ **Monsters:** Giant Worm
The Giant Worm is not really worth the effort you'll need in order to kill it, so just dodge it, grab the Arrows and make your way through the double doors on the left.

[M7] MTF MAIN HALL

■ **Items:** Red Herb
Take the Red Herb and run upstairs. Go through the door, take a right turn and go down the hallway. You'll be going to the Outer Lab.

[M8] OUTER LAB

■ **Items:** Crossbow
Nothing much to do here but grab the Crossbow. Inspect the locked door and watch a gory cut-scene. You'll run downstairs during the FMV. The hallway will be sealed off and you must go through the far door.

[M7] LOCKER ROOM

■ **Items:** Three Arrows
■ **Monsters:** Four zombies



FULL WALKTHROUGH

Kill the zombies, then search the lockers for Arrows. There's a set on the corpse near the far door. Grab them and head through the door.

[M7] BATHHOUSE

■ **Items:** Safe Key
■ **Monsters:** Two zombies
■ **Special Interest:** Valve
Kill both zombies and jump in the pool. Turn a Valve to shut off the water and reveal a Safe Key twinkling in the shallows. Grab it and head for the main hall again. Enter the final door you haven't checked.

[M7] BRIEFING ROOM

■ **Items:** Explosive Arrows
■ **Special Interest:** Map, Copier
■ **Monsters:** Three zombies

Copy the Map of the MTF on the Photocopier. Use the **Safe Key** you found in the bathroom on the locker in the back room to grab the Explosive Arrows. Head back to the hallway and use the ID Card you found in the airport on the security door near the door to the locker room. Quickly enter it.

[M7] INNER COURTYARD

■ **Monsters:** Alfred
Dodge Alfred's shots and run up the stairs. He leaves as you begin climbing, so follow him through the unlocked blue door. (Note: the locked blue compartment on the railing. You'll need a **Shield Crest**.)

[M8] HALLWAY

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets
Grab the Bullets and head through the blue metal door.

[M8] BREAK ROOM

■ **Items:** Homeostatic Pills, two Green Herbs, Ink Ribbons
■ **Special Interest:** Typewriter, Storage Box
Grab the Pills and then put them in the storage box for later on. Save. Leave the break room and then go through the door that's near the vending machines. Alfred will block off all the exits with a grim greeting. Regardless, continue through the door.

[M8] STORE ROOM

■ **Items:** Dual Uzis (no ammo)
■ **Monsters:** Bander
After you grab the Uzis, a Bander will attack you. Take him out. Then go through the door that is at the bottom of the stairs. After a cut-scene, Steve hands over the Golden Lugers in exchange for the Uzis. You'll now briefly control Steve.

[M9] BASEMENT

■ **Monsters:** Three zombies
Kill the zombies and go out the red metal door.

[M9] BOILER ROOM

■ **Monsters:** Three zombies
When the zombies are good and dead, go up the stairs on the opposite end of the hall.

[M9] SEWER HALLWAY

Run across to the other side. There's then a cut-scene after which you regain control of Claire. Go up an elevator, into a hallway, through the other door and into the garage.

[M7] GARAGE

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets
Watch a cut-scene, then grab some Bullets hidden on top of a box. Leave the garage via the door

beside the Jeep.

[M7] HALLWAY

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets
■ **Monsters:** Two zombies
Grab the Ammo and kill the zombies. Run down the hall and through the opposite door.

[M7] PAINTING ROOM

■ **Items:** Blue Shield Crest
■ **Special Note:** Typewriter
Grab the Shield Crest from the wall and run all the way back to the garage. Your exit is through the large double doors.

[M7] MOTOR POOL

■ **Items:** Arrows
■ **Monsters:** Two dogs
■ **Special Interest:** Tank
Kill the doggies and grab the Arrows. Unlock the door facing the front of the Tank. This takes you back into the MTF Courtyard. Run all the way to the Palace and use the stairs to the office. Use the Gold Lugers on the locked door to gain access.

[M5] MAIN OFFICE

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets
■ **Monsters:** Bandersnatch
■ **Special Interest:** Clock, Computer
Grab Bullets and access the Computer. Enter '1971' to uncover a secret door. A Bandersnatch attacks. Kill him and enter the secret door. Cross the wooden bridge and then head upstairs.

[M10] PRIVATE RESIDENCE COURTYARD

■ **Items:** Red Herb
■ **Monsters:** Two Bandersnatches
Kill the Banders and run up the stairs. Grab the Red Herb and run inside.

[M10] FOYER

■ **Monsters:** Four bats
Kill the bats and run through the door on the right of the main floor.

[M10] TROPHY ROOM

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets, Ink Ribbons, Arrows
■ **Monsters:** Bandersnatch
Kill the Bander and grab the Bullets. If you still have the lighter, use it on the fireplace. This will light up where the Arrows are hiding. If you don't have the lighter, just search the mantle for the Arrows and the corners of the room for the Ink Ribbons. Run back to the Foyer.

[M10] FOYER

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets, First Aid Spray
Run up the stairs – the Spray and the Bullets are sitting on a small table on the landing. Go through the door at the top of the stairs.

[M11] UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets, Green Herb
Cut-scene! Grab the Ammo and the Herb. Run down the hall left of where you entered from, into Alexia's bedroom.

[M11] ALEXIA'S BEDROOM

■ **Items:** Palace Room Key
■ **Special Note:** Ladder, Music Box
Turn off the Music Box to reveal a key on Alexia's bed. Grab the Palace Room Key and the canopy on the bed lowers to reveal a ladder (you can't go up yet). Run back to the main foyer of the Palace. In the foyer, unlock the locked door and proceed inside.

[M5] CASINO

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets, two Green Herbs, Explosive Arrows
Grab the Items and head out. Run downstairs and into the door behind the computer desk. Go into the hallway and use the key on the opposite door.

[M4] BAR

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets, Gold Shield
■ **Monsters:** Two Banders
Kill the Banders, grab the Bullets. Remove the Gold Shield from the floor behind the bar; run back to the Outer Lab in the prison area (where the guillotine is, in the caged area). Use the Shield on the door and enter.

[M2] ALLEY

■ **Items:** Green Herb
■ **Monsters:** Two zombies
Kill the zombies, grab the Ammo. Move the box and enter the door. This is the alternate way into the Communications Room that was blocked off before. Grab the Grenade Ammo and First Aid Spray that you left before. Run into the Alley.

[M2] INFIRMARY

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets, First Aid Spray
Grab the Handgun Bullets and First Aid Spray and make your way out of the door on the other side of the room.

[M2] MORGUE

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets, Red Herb, Suitcase (Handgun upgrade)
■ **Monsters:** Four zombies
Kill the zombies, then grab the Bullets, Herb and Suitcase and run back into the Infirmary.

[M2] INFIRMARY

■ **Items:** Glass Eye
■ **Monsters:** Two zombies
Cut-scene, then the zombies attack! Remember to watch out for the one in the coat – he's fast! Find the glass-eye in the zombie's lab coat. Now run into the small area off the Infirmary and insert the eye into the Anatomy Model Mannequin to reveal a secret passage.

[M1] SECRET TUNNEL

■ **Items:** Green Herb

■ **Monsters:** Two bats

Kill the bats then grab the Green Herb. Now run down the tunnel and out the far door.

[M1] TORTURE CHAMBER

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets, Arrows
■ **Monsters:** Three zombies
Kill the zombies and grab the Ammo. Run to the other side of the room and then run downstairs.

[M1] GARDEN

■ **Items:** Sword, Player Piano Music Sheet
Remove the Sword from the statue. The door that you came through locks and gas pours into the garden. Grab the handle on the centre statue; turn it counter-clockwise until the gas stops. Statue one now spins around, you must replace the sword. A zombie leaps out of the statue. Kill him, grab the rolled-up Music Sheet. Run back to the Recreation Room in the Palace.

■ **CASINO**

■ **Items:** Blue Ant Figurine
Start the piano with the Music Sheet. A panel opens up on the slot machine and you can grab the Blue Ant Figurine. Run back to the upper hallway in the Private Residence, take a right and go into the other door.

[M11] ALFRED'S BEDROOM

■ **Items:** ID Card
Place the Blue Ant on Alfred's music box. Grab the Blue Shield Crest from your storage box and head back to the MTF, then proceed to the Inner courtyard. Climb the stairs and use the Blue Shield on the panel found on the landing. This reveals an ID Card. Run downstairs and locate the ladder leading into the basement.

[M9] BOILER ROOM

Back in the boiler room, use the ID Card to open bars and step down. Run around the boiler and back into the basement (where you first took control of Steve).

[M9] BASEMENT

■ **Items:** Grenade Launcher, Grenade Ammo
Use the ID Card on the door. Take the Grenade Launcher leaning on the wall. Get the Grenades on the shelf near the door and go through it.

[M9] MAINTENANCE ROOM

■ **Items:** Handgun Bullets, Acid Grenades
■ **Monsters:** Three zombies
As usual, kill those nasty zombies and grab the Bullets. If you have the Lockpicks, unlock the cabinet with Acid Rounds. Go back into the basement and through the door next to the place you found the Grenade Launcher.

[M9] POWER ROOM

■ **Items:** Arrows
■ **Monsters:** Two Bandersnatches
Kill the Banders, grab the Arrows. Run back to the sewers and take the elevator to the second floor. Use the ID Card on the door and enter.

[M8] SURVEILLANCE

■ **Items:** Two Green Herbs, Grenade Rounds, Jeep Medal
■ **Monsters:** Two zombies
■ **Special Interest:** Security Camera Computer
Grab the Grenades and Herbs (near the giant console). Get the Jeep Medallion and access the surveillance camera from the main console. Zoom in on the picture on the wall. Note '1126' scribbled on the picture. Now run to the MTF's main hallway. Use the Access Card on the sealed door that leads up to where you first found the Crossbow. Access the panel and enter the code '1126' to get in.

[M8] LABORATORY

■ **Items:** Grenade Acid Rounds, Painting
■ **Monsters:** Five Albinoids
Grab the Acid Rounds and the Painting. An Albinoid escapes and the computer attempts to seal off the lab. You have 30 seconds to run downstairs into the hallway. Head to the Painting Room (where you found the Blue Shield).

[M7] PAINTING ROOM

■ **Items:** First Aid Spray, Gold Key
Place the Painting on the wall to reveal a scale model of the whole Facility. The First Aid Spray is in a drawer (you need Rodrigo's lockpicks to open it). A Gold Key is in the model. Grab it and run to the Palace.

[M4] PALACE FOYER



RESIDENT EVIL - CODE VERONICA X

- Run in the door behind the computer. Go to the end of the hall and use the Gold Key on the last locked door.

[M9] ASHBURY FAMILY PORTRAIT ROOM

■ Items: Red Ant Figurine

The puzzle Press a button on each painting (seven in all) in a specific order to unlock a secret panel. The first painting is on a raised platform, we'll call it painting #1 is portrait of a young Alexander. Facing painting number 1, go clockwise around the room and number the paintings in order until you get to the final painting, painting #7. Press the buttons on each in the following order: Painting #2, 5, 7, 4, 6, 3, 1. If you did it correctly, Painting #1 should slide away to reveal a vase.

Take the vase and inspect it in your inventory to view a Red Ant Figurine hiding inside. Take the figurine, and run up to Alexia's Bedroom in the Private Residence.

[M11] ALEXIA'S BEDROOM

■ Items: Record

Place the Red Ant Figurine on the music box and it opens to reveal an old-style Record. Grab the phonograph record and run into Alfred's bedroom. Insert the Record into Alfred's music box to reveal a ladder. Climb the ladder.

[M12] ATTIC

■ Items: Green Herb, Dragonfly Key

Grab the Herb and pick up the Toy Dragonfly. Inspect the Dragonfly to find a Key. Insert it into the Key Painting to turn on the carousel. The carousel will spin around and reveal another ladder going up. Again, clamber up the ladder.

[M12] LOFT

■ Items: Handgun Bullets, Ink Ribbons, Airplane Medal

■ **Special Interest:** Ladder
Grab the Bullets and Ink Ribbons, then push the ladder up against the bookcase. Use it to grab the Airplane Medal. Make your way down to the bedrooms and then switch a cut-scene. Make sure you have the three medals (Submarine, Jeep and Airplane), then go to the airport office and take the door nearest to the aquarium.

[M6] HANGAR

Place the three medals into the control box to activate the elevator. Now board the Airplane.

[M13] AIRPLANE

■ Items: Platform Lever

■ **Special Interest:** Typewriter, Storage Box
Steve tells you that the plane can't take off until the bridge is raised. Grab the Lever and run back out to the cargo room, ride up the elevator again, past the crane controls and through the other door. On top of the bridge, use the Lever on the control box, but don't activate the bridge yet. Run through the opposite door.

[M13] BRIDGE HYDRAULICS ROOM

■ Items: Cargo Key

Bad doggie,
baaaaaa...
doggie...
Clam
dispenses
justice.



Grab the Cargo Key Inside and run back out. Raise the bridge so the plane can take off. Run down to the cargo room and use the Key on the locked door by the elevator.

[M6] SERVICE ELEVATOR ROOM

■ Items: Handgun Bullets, Grenades, two Green Herbs

■ **Special Interest:** Typewriter, Storage Box
Grab the Items, then save. Push the crates into the elevator so they don't block the door. Now ride the elevator to the top - it opens in the outside courtyard of the Military Training Facility. Run to the airport and on the way Code Veronica X's first Tyrant attacks in the Passage.

■ Boss: Tyrant

Add rounds from your Grenade Launcher or Explosive Arrows will eventually kill him. Fire as fast as you can and he's defeated fairly easily, then continue to the plane to escape.

[M15] AIRPLANE

Save your game. Grab two health power-ups (either First Aid Sprays or Green/Red Herb combos) and your best weapons. Go through the door that leads to the cargo area of the plane, and find the Tyrant waiting for you - he's not too happy.

■ Boss: Tyrant

There are two ways to defeat this Tyrant. Both involve hitting a switch near the door you entered from, which releases a box that will knock him from the plane. Release the box three times (here's a time delay while it resets), or only once if you've weakened him with weapons. Just avoid his attacks, which consist of one dashing blow and a slow (but damaging) swipe. The best bet is to use Grenades or Explosive Arrows until he is staggering about, then quickly release the box and he'll fall from the rear of the plane.

[M14] ANTARCTIC TRANSPORT TERMINAL

Claire and Steve must now find a way out of Umbrella's Antarctic base. Run to the right and down the ladder. Keep running down the catwalk and enter the door next to the stairs leading down.

[M14] BARRACKS

■ Items: Three Handgun Bullets, First Aid Spray, Explosive Arrows, Ink Ribbon

■ Monsters: Four zombies

■ Special Interest:

Transport Terminal Map

Grab the Ink Ribbon (behind the bunks), Arrows (on the table) and Bullets (on the shelf). Search around the wall to find the Map. More Bullets (on the bed) appear when the camera angle changes. Now grab the Bullets and First Aid Spray in the locker. Kill all the zombies and head downstairs.

[M14] HALLWAY

■ Monsters: Giant Moths

Run down the hall and go left. Giant moths attack. Don't let them hit you - they're poisonous. Quickly enter the door on the right.

[M15] WAREHOUSE

■ Monsters: Three zombies

■ Special Interest: Conveyor Belt, Control Panel

Kill the zombies, then run around the machinery to a door marked 'Weapons' and enter.

[M15] WEAPONS ROOM

■ Items: Container Room Key, AK-47 DoorKnob

■ Monsters: Four zombies

Kill the zombies, then grab the Key on the floor. An AK-47 machine gun is in a green locker near the back of the room. Use a DoorKnob found in a zombie's dead hands on the locker next to it (it won't open just yet). Enter the warehouse, go up the steps and use the Container Room Key on the door.

[M15] CONTAINER ROOM

■ Special Note: Gas Valve

Nothing in here but cylinders of gas. Run to the other side and exit.

[M15] GENERATOR ROOM

■ Items: Two Handgun Bullets, four Green Herbs

■ Monsters: Three dogs

■ Special Interest: Generator Control Panel, Light Switch

Kill the dogs first then search the room. Grab the Ammo and Green Herbs and run under the back platform to activate a switch. Turn on the generator at the control panel to restore power to the whole base. Quickly make your way back into the warehouse and go through the door with the letters 'B.Q.W.' on them.

[M15] B.O.W. ROOM

■ Items: Two Handgun Bullets, Arrows, Green Herb, UPC Label, Gas Mask

■ Monsters: Three Giant Spiders

Here, two Giant Spiders will go for the kill. Use heavy ordinance (the AK-47 is a pretty good choice) to stop them before they can poison you. Watch out for the third Spider sneakingly hiding under the grating. Grab hold of the Gas Mask from the wall panel near the entrance. Pick up the UPC Label from the crates. Enter the warehouse.

[M15] WAREHOUSE

■ Special Interest: Blue Herbs

■ Monsters: Moths

Slap the UPC sticker on the box next to the conveyor control panel and turn the machinery on. Exit the warehouse, into the hallway. You now see a permanent pot of Blue Herbs (good to remember if you're running low). Take a left into the transport base office.

[M15] TRANSPORT BASE OFFICE

■ Items: Arrows, Green Herb, Ink Ribbon, Powerpot/

Crane Room Key

■ Special Interest: Typewriter, Storage Box, Locked Curio Cabinet, Bookshelf, Locker

Grab the Items, then save your game. Push the bookshelf behind the desk into the wall to reveal a secret room. Open a locker down the passage and push the button inside to reveal yet another secret room. Grab the Powerpot and then inspect it to reveal a Key. Take the Key and run back up to the catwalks. Now enter the doors by the ladder.

[M14] CATWALKS

Run to Claire's left and use the key on the door at the end.

[M14] CRANE ROOM

■ Items: 4-Way Pipe Wheel

■ Special Interest:

Steve's pining look

Go into the Pump Room through the opposite door. Grab the 4-Way Pipe Wheel and exit back into the Crane Room. Cut-scene. Now, turn off the gas in the container room. Problem: you have a

Valve Wheel, but it's a 4-Way Plug and unfortunately you need an 8-Way Plug. Run down the catwalk and enter the door on the opposite side.

[M14] WORKSHOP

■ Items: Two Handgun Bullets, Green Herb, Blue Herb, Ink Ribbon

■ Special Interest: Drill Machine

Grab Items. Insert the 4-Way Valve Wheel in the retelling machine at the back of the room, and it becomes an 8-Way Plug. Return to the lower Warehouse Room and fight five zombies to enter the Container Room again. Make sure you have the Gas Mask in your inventory.

[M15] CONTAINER ROOM

■ Items: Sniper Rifle

Run to the Valve Handle; use the 8-Way Wheel to shut off the gas. Cut-scene. Climb down and grab the Sniper Rifle, then jump into the digging machine. (Note: store the Grenade Launcher and Grenades in the closest storage box before getting into the digging machine. Claire won't need them, so it's best to keep them safe.)

[NOT ON MAP] HELPAD

■ Items: First Aid Spray

■ Monsters: Moderatu

Grab the First Aid Spray. Run for the ladder, then watch the cut-scene. Now prepare to fight the glimp...

■ Boss: Nosferatu

Zoom in and aim directly for his heart with the Sniper Rifle. If you don't get him with the seven Sniper Bullets, run and use any other weapon on him until he dies. If he gets close, he'll throw poison spores or try to push you off the rooftop. Cut-scene time, then you assume control of Chris Redfield as he arrives on Umbrella Island.

[M16] SECRET CAVE ENTRANCE

■ Items: Arrows, Green Herb, Ink Ribbon

■ Special Interest: Typewriter, Storage Box, Wall Sculpture

Chris starts with only one box of Ammo, a First Aid Spray and the Handgun. Watch a cut-scene. Rodrigo is eaten by the MTP's worm. Grab all the Items, get the Grenade Launcher from the box and head through the door.

[M16] UNDERGROUND PASSAGE

■ Items: Green Herb, Blue Herb, Arrows, Handgun Bullets, Lighter (optional), Dual Uzis (optional)

■ Monsters: Giant Worm

That big old Worm is back again. Kill it, and it spits out Rodrigo and his Lighter. Run back to the cave entrance and equip the Lighter near the sculpture to receive Dual Uzis. Go up the elevator in the underground passage.

[M7] MTF GARAGE/MOTOR POOL

■ Monsters: Three zombies

■ Items: Handgun Bullets

Kill the zombies, then run outside into the Motor Pool. Go to the rear of the tank and hit the button. It'll move forward to reveal a secret elevator. Grab the Handgun Bullets next to the elevator and then descend.

[M9] HALLWAY

■ Items: Shotgun Shells, Green Herb, Blue Herb, Battery

■ Monsters: Two Giant Spiders

Grab the Items, including a Battery. Giant Spiders attack, so avoid them.

[M9] OFFICE

■ Items: Shotgun Shells, Handgun Bullets, Acid Grenades, Green Herb, Ink Ribbon, Gold Luger (optional)

■ Special Interest: Storage Box, Typewriter, Drawer Puzzle

Grab the Items, then save your game. Open four drawers in this sequence - red, green, blue, bottom - to reveal a Gold Luger. Useless otherwise, it unlocks Steve in Battle Mode if you put it in a storage box. Go up the elevator into the garage. Put the Battery on the cargo elevator and ride upstairs.

[M8] UPPER GARAGE

■ Items: Refrigerator Key

Run left. Now grab the Refrigerator Key on the table and run through the door.

[M9] HALLWAY

Cut-scene time. Go through the only unlocked door available.

[M8] OUTER LAB

■ Items: Waltpack, Arrows

■ Monsters: Three zombies

Kill all the zombies, then grab the Arrows and Waltpack. Run to the hallway and take the elevator down to the basement.

[M17] SERVERS

■ Items: Shotgun, Handgun Bullets, two Red Herbs, Ink Ribbon

■ Monsters: One zombie

■ Special Interest:

Shotgun Wall Switch

Climb downstairs and remove the Shotgun from the wall. Grab Items and run through the door.

[M9] INCUBATION LAB

■ Items: Green Herb, AK-47 Magazine

■ Special Interest:

Incubation Control Panel

Grab the Herbs, then run up upstairs. Access the Control Panel to lower an incubation tube. Grab the Magazine for the AK-47 on top of the tube. Head out through the other door.

[M8] POWER ROOM

■ Items: DoorKnob

■ Monsters: Two Hunters

Pick up the DoorKnob and kill the Hunters with the Shotgun or Grenade Launcher. Run through the door with a red light over it.

[M9] CHEMICAL LAB

■ Items: Blue Liquid, Handgun Bullets, Shotgun Shells, Red Herb, Blue Herb

■ Monsters: Poison Hunter

Grab the Items. Use the Refrigerator Key to examine the fridge. A temp gauge appears. Set temp to 12.8°C to obtain Blue Liquid. A Poison Hunter attacks so flee to the second floor lab where you found the Waltpack.

[M8] OUTER LAB

■ Monsters: One Hunter

Kill the Hunter, then go through the now-unlocked door near the stairs.

[M8] UPPER GARAGE

■ Items: Handgun Bullets, Model Tank

Grab the Model Tank and Ammo, then head to 1F via the elevator. Run into the Painting Room with the scale model of the Facility.

[M7] PAINTING ROOM

■ Items: Elevator Key

Place the Model Tank in the model of the base to open a secret panel containing an Elevator Key. Take the Key and then run to the Incubation Lab down in the basement.

[M8] INCUBATION LAB

■ Items: Wesker's Sunglasses (Optional)

■ Monsters: Bandersnatch

FULL WALKTHROUGH

Cut-scene time again. Kill the Bandersnatch, grab the Sunglasses (this unlocks Wesker as a playable character in Battle Mode) then head into the Power Room.

[M5] POWER ROOM

■ Your Key Activates the elevator. Take a ride to the 1F main hallway. Now enter the Briefing Room on the right.

[M7] BRIEFING ROOM

■ Items: Arrows, Shotgun Shells, Acid Grenades

■ Monsters: Four zombies

Kill the zombies, then grab the Arrows, Shells and Acid Rounds. Run through the hole in the back office wall and climb down the ladder.

[M9] BOILER ROOM

■ Monsters: Four zombies

Turn on the fan to suck any toxic gas away. Kill the zombies, then run down the hall into the basement. Enter the Maintenance Room on the other side of the Boiler Room.

[M5] MAINTENANCE

■ Items: Green Chemical, Gun Modification Toolbox

Grab the Green Chemical and inspect the Gun Modification Toolbox on the desk. Now upgrade your Handgun. Return to the Main Courtyard and into the elevator that takes you to the Airport.

[M6] SERVICE ELEVATOR

■ Special Interest: Typewriter, Storage Box
Save your game, then replenish/relieve your inventory. Exit into the lift room.

[M13] CARGO LIFT ROOM

■ Monsters: One Hunter

Kill the Hunter and take a ride in the elevator to collect some Shotgun Shells in the Hydraulic Control Room.

[M13] HYDRAULIC CONTROL ROOM

■ Items: Shotgun Shells
■ Monsters: Three zombies

■ Special Interest:

Bridge Control Puzzle

A puzzle: Press buttons in the following order: 3, 3, 5, 10, 3, 5 to restore controls. Kill the zombies and find some Shells near their corpses. Run to the bridge and lower it. Take the elevator down and head for the bridge area.

[M13] BRIDGE

■ Monsters: One Hunter

Kill the Hunter and cross the bridge back into the office.

[M6] AIRPORT OFFICE

■ Monsters: Three zombies

Kill the three zombies and enter the door next to the aquarium.

[M6] AIRPLANE HANGAR

■ Items: Submarine Medal, Jeep Medal, Airplane Medal

■ Monsters: One Hunter

Kill the Hunter. Now turn power to the Control Panel off via the main computer. Retrieve Claire's three medals from the Airplane lift and return to the Painting Room in the Military Training Facility.

[M7] PAINTING ROOM

■ Items: Two Shotgun Shells, Green Herb

■ Special Interest:

Secret Panel

Put the three Medals into the Secret Panel (revealed when you placed the Tank into the Facility Model) to uncover a switch. Press it and the model slides into the wall to show a Green Herb, some Shells and a ladder leading down. Go down the ladder.

[M9] SEWER TUNNEL

■ Items: Grenades, Green Herb

■ Monsters: Two Giant Spiders

Avoid the two Giant Spiders. The Grenades and the Herb can be found in an alcove on Chris's right. Now go to the end of the hall and down a ladder.

[M17] SEWER ACCESS

■ Items: Two Green Herbs, Blue Herb, Blue Shield Crest

■ Monsters: Adult Albino

Grab the Herbs, then run to the pool area. The Blue Shield Crest is right in the middle of the pool, guarded by an adult Albino...

■ Boss: Albino

Don't waste Ammo killing this monster. While at maximum health (with a few herbs in your inventory), take a plunge in the pool. Pick up the Blue Shield Crest and then get out sharpish. The Albino will electrocute you, but he can't kill you if you're quick. Use a Herb and then return to the Office with the Storage Box, near the locked double doors with the Shield Crest impression.

[M9] OFFICE

■ Items: Green Chemical,

Golden Axe

Access the Storage Box. Remove the Blue and Green Chemicals and combine them to get a Purple Chemical. Combine the Purple Chemical and the Blue Shield Crest to burn away the metal until you're left with a Golden Axe. Leave, then use the Axe on the door in the hallway to open it. Cut-scene time - return to Antarctica

[M14] ANTARCTIC TRANSPORT TERMINAL

■ Monsters: Two Tentacles

Exit through the only unlocked door and walk along the catwalk area (where Claire's plane crashed). Shoot the Tentacles blocking you repeatedly - they do withdraw. Climb down the ladder and head down into the hallway.

[M15] HALLWAY

■ Monsters: Two zombies

Kill the zombies and enter the office.

[M15] OFFICE

■ Items: Die, Ink Ribbons

Use the Golden Axe on the axe-shaped wall socket next to the curio cabinet to open a cupboard containing Ink Ribbons and a slx-sided Die. Return upstairs to the catwalks/upper warehouse area. Head to the Workshop where the caged zombie was.

[M14] WORKSHOP

■ Items: Shotgun Shells, Suitcase

■ Monsters: Three zombies

Kill the zombies. Now grab the Shells and Suitcase. Exit to the catwalks and enter the Container Room where Claire has already shut off the gas.

[M15] CONTAINER ROOM

■ Items: 8-Way Valve Wheel

■ Monsters: Five zombies

Quickly grab the 8-Way Valve Wheel before the zombies attack. Now run to the broken area of the catwalk (It's along the left) and jump onto the ice. Scramble up the other side and enter the door.

[M14] HALLWAY

■ Monsters: Hunter

A Seeker detects you and calls in a Hunter. Kill the Hunter before he can attack and run to the end of the hall into the elevator. Head down into the courtyard.

[M18] COURTYARD

■ Monsters: Hunter

Kill the Hunter and take the door across from the elevator.

[M18] BASEMENT HALLWAY

■ Items: Two Green Herbs, one Blue Herb

■ Monsters: Six zombies

Kill the zombies, grab all the Herbs and enter the 'High Voltage' room.

[M18] EMERGENCY GENERATOR ROOM

■ Items: Two Handgun Bullets, two Shotgun Shells, two Green Herbs, Blue Herb, Ink Ribbons

■ Special Interest: Typewriter, Storage Box, Generator

Save your game. Insert the Valve Handle into the generator and crank the connection together, then run to the other side and hit the switch. Lights go on and the door at the end of the icy hallway activates - run through it.

[M18] STATUE ROOM

■ Items: 4-Way Adapter Plug, Magnum Rounds

■ Special Interest: Map, Statue, Tiger Statue, Tiger Eyes

Push the Statue onto the cracked tile near the cabinet. It'll fall through the floor and conveniently uncover the Map. Run down the hallway and remove Eyes from the Tiger Statue. It splns to reveal a 4-Way Adapter with an 8-Way attachment on one side and a few handy Magnum rounds on the other. Grab both and quick! Now head through the brown elevator door.

[M19] COCOON

■ Items: Dragonfly Wing, two Green Herbs

■ Monsters: Moths

Exit the elevator, go down the hall (avoid the moths) and onto the catwalk. Now run left, through the door.

[M19] INNER OFFICE

■ Items: Handgun Bullets, two Green Herbs

■ Monsters: Four zombies

Kill the zombies, then get the Bullets, Green Herbs and exit the room. Run to the opposite side of the catwalk and head inside.

[M19] ALEXIA'S LABORATORY

■ Items: Alex's Ring/Blue Jewel, 4-Way Valve Wheel

■ Special Interest: Alexander Ashford's corpse, Die Puzzle

Log on to the computer and view the Die clockwise to get the correct code - AA, Crown, Heart, Spade. A slot then opens. Place the Die inside and the incubation tube opens. Alfred's corpse emerges. Take his Ring and inspect it - it becomes a Blue Jewel. Return to the Generator Room, grab the 8-Way Valve Wheel and combine it with the 4-Way Adapter to get a 4-Way Valve Wheel. See how that works? Now take the Valve Wheel and Fire Extinguisher back to the courtyard where the elevator is.

[M18] COURTYARD

■ Items: Two Dragonfly wings

With lights on, you see the two Dragonfly Wings in the Courtyard. Grab them and return through the hallway and back up the elevator.

[M14] HALLWAY

There are Seekers placed all over the Hall, so be careful to avoid them. Now, head through the double doors alongside the wall.

[M14] UTILITY ROOM

■ Items: Crane Key

■ Special Interest: Fire Extinguisher Foam, two Elevators

■ Monsters: One Hunter

Take the elevator at the back of the room. Use the Valve Wheel on the 4-Way Plug to drain the aquarium. Climb down for the Crane Key. Kill the Hunter, go down the small elevator and press the flashing blue button near the second lift to raise

the foam. Refill your Fire Extinguisher and take the second elevator down.

[M15] WEAPONS LOCKER

■ Items: Magnum, Plug, three Handgun Bullets
Extinguish the fire, then grab the Magnum on top of the conveyor belt box and run to the rear of the room to equip your Lights. Now, open the broken cabinet the one with the loose doorknob during Claire's last adventure and grab the Handgun Bullets inside. Quickly exit and return to the upper warehouse catwalks.

[M14] UPPER WAREHOUSE

■ Items: Emerald Earring/ Green Gem

■ Monsters: Giant Spider

Use the Crane Key to start the crane. It's grisly cut-scene, before having to deal a Giant Spider. Use Flame Rounds to kill it in two hits. Grab the Emerald Earring on the Ice - inspect it to get the Green Gem. Return to the courtyard where you found the Dragonfly Wings and enter the mansion's doors.

[M20] FOYER

■ Items: Knife

■ Special Interest: Claire's goo-fied body, Ashford Family Painting

Go upstairs, then grab the Knife on the landing. Head to the small alcove behind the staircase and use the Knife to free Claire. If Claire has been infected, then quickly head back to the Utility Room on B1F where you found the extinguisher foam - kill the zombies and you'll find a serum on the shelf.

[M20] OFFICE

■ Items: Handgun Bullets, Shotgun Shells, Green Herb, Red Herb
■ Special Interest: Typewriter, Storage Box, Shotgun Wall Switch

Grab items and health power-ups. Exit out the opposite door.

[M20] HALLWAY

■ Items: Arrows, Grenades

■ Monsters: Two Tentacles

Shoot the Tentacles until they retreat. Two display cabinets can be moved to find Arrows and Grenades. Go through the door right at the end of the hallway.

[M20] DUNGEON

■ Items: Two Arrows, Glass Cannonball/Card Key

■ Monsters: One zombie

■ Special Interest:

Stone Press, Cannon

Kill the zombie, then head upstairs. Grab the Arrows in the open cell and inspect the Cannon. Crank the barrel downward and a Glass Cannonball with Card Key falls out. It activates a crushing device. Take care, head quickly put down the Glass Cannonball to smash it. Move away and then rapidly retrieve the Card Key. Run downstairs through the door closest to the one you first entered through.

[M20] INNER COURTYARD

The Card Key opens the closed gate; run to the end of passage. It's cut-scene time, then another boss fight.

■ Boss: Steve

Tyrant-Steve cannot be killed, so just run like hell back the way you came. Keep running! Run, run, run! Two hits and you've had it. After you've escaped, there's another cut-scene and then you're Chris again.

[M20] MAIN FOYER

■ Items: Red Gem

■ Monsters: Alexia 1

Prepare to fight Alexia's first form.

■ Boss: Alexia

Alexia walks forward (if she touches you, you're dead) flinging acid (which flares into flames for a

brief period of time). Shoot her with the Magnum and keep your distance until she drops, but remember: she can walk through flames, and you can't. Pick up the Red Ring and view it to reveal the Red Gem. Update in the foyer, place all three gems into the family painting to reveal a secret door. Go inside.

HALLWAY

■ Items: Two Green Herbs

■ Monsters: Four zombies

Kill the zombies and enter the first door on Chris's right.

COMPUTER ROOM

■ Items: Two Green Herbs,

Dragonfly Wing

Grab the two Green Herbs, then get the Dragonfly Wing. Go down the hallway and through a 'new' door to the left of Alexia's bedroom.

OFFICE

■ Items: First Aid Spray, Shotgun Shells, Foyer Key, two Tiger Eyes

■ Special Interest: Typewriter

Grab the Shells, Spray and Foyer Key (It's inside the desk drawer and return to the main foyer where you fought Alexia. Unlock the door with the Foyer Key and run to the Generator Room. Use the Valve Wheel to turn off the power again, then run back to the Tiger Statue. With the power off, the Statue can't move when you remove the Gems. Grab the Red and Blue Tiger Eyes. Go upstairs to the replica of the private residence hall and enter Alfred's room.

[M20] ALFRED AND ALEXIA'S BEDROOM

■ Items: Phonograph Record

Place the Blue Tiger Eye on the music box, head into Alexia's bedroom and place the Red Tiger Eye on her music box to be able to grab the Phonograph Record. Return to Alfred's bedroom and place the Record into his music box to reveal a secret ladder. Climb up it.

[M20] CONFERENCE ROOM

■ Items: Handgun Bullets, two Green Herbs,

Dragonfly Body (Dragonfly Key)

Grab the Bullets, Herbs, and Dragonfly Body from the pail on the table, then return to the computer room. Exit out the opposite door into the hallway leading to the Dungeon. Run into the office to combine the Dragonfly Body with four Dragonfly Wings to make the Dragonfly Key. Push a shelf aside and place the Shotgun on the rack to get the Grenade Flame and Grenade Acid rounds. Grab your best weapons with the most Ammo. Fill out your inventory with health power-ups, leaving just one slot open. Head for the Dungeon.

[M20] DUNGEON

■ Items: Veronica Key Card

Cut-scene time. You've got the Veronica Key Card. Go upstairs and use the Dragonfly Key to enter a new area.

[M20] CONTROL ROOM

■ Items: Green Herb

■ Monsters: Two zombies

Kill the zombies, then grab the Herb and head upstairs. Initiate the computer's self-destruct sequence to blow up the base within a set amount of time - the password is VERONICA (of course). Go back to the Dungeon area for your final showdown.

[M20] FINAL BOSS:

ALEXIA 2

■ Items: B.O.W. Gun

Shoot Alexia (preferably with the Magnum) so Claire can escape. Alexia morphs into a pile of goo, so keep shooting until she winds up with a tentacle. When she sends out the tiny critters to attack you, just aim low. Her lower body disintegrates and her upper body takes the aim. Grab the B.O.W. Gun from its cradle and take your best shot. She's mobile, so aim well. You only get one try before she attacks with acid, but one shot is enough.

POWERLINE - HINTS AND TIPS

**Eve of Extinction**

(SLES 50758)

Q: I'm having trouble with some of the bosses in the game.

A: Most of the bosses in this game are pretty easy provided you know the trick to them.

Dr Wiseman: The biggest problem with Dr Wiseman is getting to him with that laser barrier in between the two of you. See if taking out the two machines in that room helps.

Hans: When you start this battle you are told to destroy Hans' Shadow. See if you can do anything with the chandelier; this might make things easier.

**Maximo**

(SLES 50703)

Q: I'm having trouble defeating Captain Cadaver.

A: Have you noticed those grates on the ground? Things might be a bit easier if you knocked his peg leg into one of them!

Unlock Gallery Mode: During the game, be sure to collect all four Sorceress Kisses and power them up before going on to complete the adventure. In doing so you will unlock Gallery mode on the main menu which will give you an insightful and detailed tour of the game's production.



that hurt the vampires if they touch it. So you need to position yourself so that a Fury attack will knock Sebastian into the steam. Now block his attacks then counter, throwing him into the steam. After such a hit, Sebastian will launch a red (unblockable) attack, so be ready to dodge. Knock him into the steam about 5 times and step 2 will start.

Step 2: Get away from the center platform, or Kain will be fried before this stage even commences. Sebastian runs around the room, and the steam chases Kain. In the middle of the room is a giant energy stream. Sebastian will eventually stop on one of the walls to leap at Kain. Move around, watching where Sebastian is so when he stops and says 'I'm coming Kain' position yourself opposite him so he throws himself into the energy stream. Do this 3 times and step 3 will start.

Step 3: This is the final stage of the fight. First jump up onto the platform in the middle and use Charm on Sebastian's helper. Have him flick the switch on the right. From here it is just a straight fight; just block his flurry of attacks, and hit him with Fury attacks when possible and you'll defeat him. You will receive the excellent Berserk power when you defeat him.

**Bloody Roar 3**

(SLES 50203)

Not enough characters for you? Well here is how to get the secret characters.

Kohryu: Play Arcade mode and finish the first 4 matches without losing a round or continuing. In the 5th match, instead of facing one of the regular 12 characters, Kohryu will be your next opponent. Defeat him. Now continue the game as usual - whether you finish it or not you will be able to access Kohryu. To select him in the Character Select screen, go to the bottom row and move the cursor all the way to the left or right off the screen. Kohryu's portrait will appear.

Uranus: Play Arcade mode and defeat all 9 opponents (including Xion) without

any continues (it's OK to lose a round, though). If done correctly, a "Special Stage" will appear after you defeat Xion, with Uranus being the final opponent. You will have to defeat her no matter what. If you lose, then the game will end and you will see your character's ending. Once Uranus has been defeated, she can be used in any mode. At the Character Select screen, go to the top row and move the cursor all the way to the left or right off the screen. Uranus' portrait will appear.

**Fantavision**

(SLES 50860)

Released to coincide with the official launch of the PS2, Fantavision is an oddie but most definitely a goldie. Well someone must still be playing it because a full year and a half after its debut, this 'bangle' code has come to light that enables you to unlock everything! To access it, simply go to the Options menu, hold **□ + □ + □ + □** and then press **○, ↑, ○, ↓, ○, ↓**.

**Paras-Dakar Rally**

(SLES 50212)

The game wasn't really up to much, but at least you can prolong your enjoyment slightly with this new code. Simply start a new race and enter your name as LUMBERJACK to unlock all of the hidden cars contained in the game.

**Parappa The Rapper 2**

(SLES 50408)

Unlock The Blue Hat: Successfully complete the game once to unlock a blue hat for Parappa. Press the right analogue stick in [R3] at the 'Press Start' screen to select the new coloured hat.

Unlock The Pink Hat: Successfully complete the game twice to unlock a pink hat for Parappa. Press the right analogue stick in [R3] at the 'Press Start' screen to select the new coloured hat.

Unlock The Yellow Hat: Successfully complete the game three times to

unlock a yellow hat for Parappa. Press the right analogue stick inward [R3] at the 'Press Start' screen to select the new coloured hat.

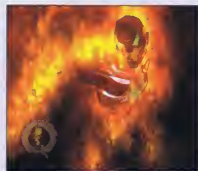
Unlock The Song Test: Successfully complete the game four times to unlock a new dog house that allows you to listen to any song in levels that you finished with a 'cool' rating.

**Quake III: Revolution**

(SLES 50126)

Bonus Characters And Bonus Level

Successfully complete Campaign mode on the 'I Can Win' difficulty setting to unlock a bonus level and two hidden characters who appear after the credits have rolled. You can then unlock this extra bonus level and the new characters in Multiplayer mode by successfully completing it in the Single-player mode.

**Shadow Man 2**

(SLES 50446)

Q: I'm stuck in Louisiana trying to collect the bird skulls.

A: Hopefully you've already realised that this means you need to shoot the birds that you see flying around (the sniper rifle is best used for this). If you seem to run out of birds to shoot, make sure you've looked for a barrel under water. Shooting this could open up exciting new possibilities.

**Batman Vengeance**

(SLES 50355)

Q: I am pretty confused when I get up to the bridge level, and I am not quite sure where to go.

A: Well, grab the flash bombs and cuff the thug in front of you. Now, check out the boxes near where you start. On top of one is something glowing. To get up there, you need to jump off the boxes and veer to the right so that you glide around the box next to you, and still land on the boxes. It's pretty hard so

don't lose heart if you don't get it right away. Once you make that jump, jump across the small gap in front of you. Grab the cheat envelope B and three points. Head back and climb the ladder on the boxes again and jump down on the other side. Cuff the two thugs. Run around the truck with its headlights on. You'll see a box of batarang behind a construction barricade. Jump over the barricade and press against the wall to slip through. This gives you a cut scene and you should be right from there!

**Star Wars: Jedi Starfighter**

(SLES 50371)

Q: How do you unlock the extra ships?

A: Unlocking the extra ships is dependent on what you have and haven't done in the game. Try completing some of these objectives in order to unlock extra crafts:

Advanced Jedi Starfighter: complete the bonus objective on Act 2: Mission 4.

Sabaoth Fighter: complete the bonus objective on Act 2: Mission 5.

TIE Fighter: complete the bonus objective in Act 1: Mission 4.

To unlock the X-Wing: finish the bonus objective in Act 1: Mission 3.

Fett ship Slave 1: complete all hidden objectives for Player One.

**REZ**

(SLES 50438)

Extra Areas: Complete the following modes or accumulate a certain number of hours play to unlock the following new areas.

Unlock Area 5: Obtain a 100% ranking in areas one through to four.

Unlock The Lost Area: Successfully complete Area 5 or accumulate a total of five hour's worth of play.

Unlock Transcension: Obtain the first place ranking in The Lost Area.

Bonus Score Attack Areas And Beams: By successfully completing various areas in the default game, you'll unlock them in Score Attack mode. Also, six different beam types can be unlocked by completing any combination of areas in Score Attack mode. A new beam type is unlocked every five times this is done, so you'll need to complete them 30 times to unlock every bonus beam.

New Views: Obtain the following rankings in the corresponding area to unlock an assortment of snazzy new camera angles.

the shortlist

Want the definitive verdicts on the PS2 games available right now? Then welcome to The ShortList.

OPSP2 AWARDS

To filter out the pearls from the swine, OPS2 has introduced a brand new colour-coded ratings system.



GOLD

Only awarded to games that score the full 10/10.



SILVER

Awarded to titles that score 9/10.



BRONZE

Awarded to titles that score 8/10.

2002 FIFA WORLD CUP
(EA Sports/EA)
The World Cup version of FIFA 2002 with more pizzazz but sadly lacking in game modes.
Overall 07

7 BLADES
(Konami/KCEJ)
Ninja-styled adventure with a 'healthy' dose of chop-choy gameplay.
Overall 06

18 WHEELER
(Acclaim/Sega/Acclaim Cheltenham)
Brash, chunky and colourful truck racer. Unfortunately it just doesn't offer enough substance to satisfy the hardened gamer.
Overall 06

ACE COMBAT: DISTANT THUNDER
(SCEE/Namco)
Best Ace Combat yet. A graphical-polished flight sim with a variety of missions.
Overall 07

AGE OF EMPIRES II: THE AGE OF KINGS
(Konami/Microsoft/Ensemble Studios/KCEJ)
PC-style real-time strategy with great depth and longevity. Absolutely engrossing if a touch difficult to control.
Overall 07

AIRBLADE
(SCEE/Criterion)
Intricate visuals, sublime handling, massive airs – everything you could want hovering to be.
Overall 08

ALL-STAR BASEBALL 2002
(Acclaim/Acclaim Studios Austin)
An enjoyable all-round game of baseball with oodles of depth, and surprisingly compelling to watch as well as to play.
Overall 07

ALONE IN THE DARK: THE NEW NIGHTMARE
(Infogrames/Darkworks)
An undeniably scary survival horror game series, but one that fails to frighten the pants off the PS2 in this comeback.
Overall 06

AQUA AQUA: WETRIX 2.0
(SCI/Zed Two)
Addictive, well-realised update of the N64 puzzler Wetrix.
Overall 07

ARCTIC THUNDER
(Midway/Midway/Inland Productions)
Crude visuals, but plenty of fast and furious gameplay.
Overall 07

ARMORED CORE 2
(Ubi Soft/From Software)
Infinitely-tweakable first-person mech shooter.
Overall 07

ARMY MEN AIR ATTACK: BLADE'S REVENGE
(3DO/3DO)
Dulsville helicopter game.
Overall 02

ARMY MEN: GREEN ROGUE
(3DO/3DO)
On-rails shooter that manages to plumb new depths of soldering tedium.
Overall 01

ARMY MEN: SARGE'S HEROES 2
(3DO/3DO)
Another poorly realised shooter, from the series that stars little green plastic soldiers.
Overall 03

ATV OFFROAD
(SCEE/Rainbow Studios)
Quad bike stunt racer with dubious pack AI but more than enough thrills.
Overall 06

BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE
(Interplay/Black Isle Studios)
Play Dungeons & Dragons in digital format. An RPG that does the PS2 great justice.
Overall 08

BARBARIAN
(Interplay/Ritus)
A rough-cut fighting game with RPG elements and branching stories.
Overall 07

BATMAN VENGEANCE
(Ubi Soft/Ubi Soft)
Interesting action adventure, but just a little too on rails to provide a real challenge.
Overall 06

BLOOD OMEN
(Eidos/Crystal Dynamics)
An occasionally very satisfying blood sucking adventure let down by unoriginal gameplay.
Overall 06

BURNOUT
(Acclaim/Criterion Studios)
OutRun grows up, and learns how to crash properly. Thrilling, edgy race action that will threaten your no claims bonus.
Overall 08

CAPCOM VS SNK 2
(Capcom/Eurosoft/Capcom)
A superb 2D beat-'em-up from the house that knows all there is to know about combat. With endless two-player fun.
Overall 09

CART FURY CHAMPIONSHIP RACING
(Midway/Midway)
Arcade racer with crazy physics and a dose of high-speed hard shouldering.
Overall 06

CENTRE COURT: HARD HITTER
(Midas Interactive/Magical Company)
Cheap, arcade-style tennis game. Fun Multiplayer option, but not much else.
Overall 04

CONFLICT ZONE
(Ubi Soft/EA)
A pretty run-of-the-mill RTS game that cleverly forces you to take account of media coverage.
Overall 06

CRASH BANDICOOT: THE WRATH OF CORTEX
(Vivendi/Universal/Traveller's Tales)
Crash spins onto PS2 but little has changed from PSone.
Overall 06

CRAZY TAXI
(Acclaim/Sega/Acclaim)
Arcade thrills aplenty in this no-holds-barred city-smashing racer. If you want speed, buy this now.
Overall 08

CRICKET 2002
(EA Sports/EA Sports)
The best leather-on-willow sim on any console, ever. Relax and make like it's summer.
Overall 08

DARK CLOUD
(SCEE/Level 5)
An enthralling RPG with atmospheric music and a world-building element thrown in for good measure.
Overall 07

DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX 2
(Acclaim/Z-Axis)
Orthodox but impressive, this BMX sim has an inventive array of tricks.
Overall 07

DEAD OR ALIVE 2
(SCEE/Tecmo)
Slistering beat-'em-up that's famous for its stealthy gameplay and collection of extremely well-endowed lady fighters.
Overall 07

DEUS EX
(Eidos/Ion Storm)
The thinking man's action/shooter/adventure genre-busting game that redefines expectations. Superb.
Overall 09

DEVIL MAY CRY
(Capcom/Eurosoft/Capcom)
Melding rip-roaring battling with lush surroundings and a superb gothic atmosphere. One of the best PS2 games yet? Definitely.
Overall 09

DNA
(Virgin Interactive/Hudsonsoft)
Gene warfare and confusing puzzles abound in this bizarre manga adventure.
Overall 06

DONALD DUCK: QUACK ATTACK
(Ubi Soft/Diary Interactive)
A first-generation platformer that suffers from Stone Age gameplay and graphics.
Overall 04

DRAGON'S LAIR
(Digital Leisure/Cinematronics)
Should have stayed firmly stuck on the Laser Disc where it belonged.
Overall 02

DRAGON'S LAIR II: TIMEWARP
(Digital Leisure/Cinematronics)
Painfully dull arcade sequel.
Overall 01

DRIVEN
(BAMI Entertainment/BAMI Studios Europe)
Poor racing game from a poor film licence.
Overall 04

DRIVING EMOTION TYPE-S
(EA/Square)
Dismal racer. Fails to evoke any emotion at all.
Overall 04

DROPSHIP: UNITED PEACE FORCE
(SCEE/Studio Camden)
Impressive combat sim that rewards commitment with paced and varied gameplay.
Overall 08

DYNASTY WARRIORS 3
(THQ/KCEJ)
More of the same great mass battles and explosive action, marred slightly by samey gameplay.
Overall 08

ECCO THE DOLPHIN: DEFENDER OF THE FUTURE
(SCEE/Sega/Appaloosa)
More of the same great mass battles and explosive action, marred slightly by samey gameplay.
Overall 08

EPHEMERAL FANTASIA
(Konami/KCEJ East)
Bernani-style RPG where pulling off a guitar solo is integral to the plot.
Overall 07

ESCAPE FROM MONKEY ISLAND
(Activision/LucasArts)
Adventure that includes smart visuals, witty script and intelligent puzzles.
Overall 08

ESPN INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD
(Konami/KCEJ)
Graphically impressive athletics sim marred only by lfy AI.
Overall 06

ESPN NATIONAL HOCKEY NIGHT
(Konami/KCEJ)
Other hockey sims on the market with better gameplay put this in the sin bin.
Overall 06

ESPN NBA 2NIGHT
(Konami/KCEJ)
Hockey game makes this one for basketball heads only.
Overall 06

ESPN X GAMES SKATEBOARDING
(Konami/KCEJ)
Not-very-extreme skateboarding sim with some unsightly graphical glitches. You're best off sticking with Tony Hawk's.
Overall 05

ESPN WINTER X-GAMES SNOWBOARDING
(Konami/KCEJ)
Life-like snowboarder, ruined by unsightly bland graphics, unresponsive controls and a lack of excitement.
Overall 06

EOE: EVE OF EXTINCTION
(Eidos/Yuke's)
A dull, button mashing affair.
Overall 05

EVERGRACE
(Ubi Soft/Crave Entertainment/From Software)
An ultimately depressing role-playing game, that fails to engage the player at any meaningful level.
Overall 02

EVIL TWIN
(Ubi Soft/In-Intro)
Adventure from the dark side of platforming. Average, far-from-perfect animation with 76 levels of twisted plot.
Overall 05

EXTERMINATION
(SCEE/Deep Space)
Alien-inspired survival horror-fest that is set in a deserted Antarctic research base. Positively crawling with cool design innovations.
Overall 07

EXTREME-G 3
(Acclaim/Acclaim)
A neon beast of a future bike racer that requires skill and brains. Takes some 'inspiration' from the WipeOut series. Not for the faint-hearted.
Overall 08

F1 2001
(Konami/EA Sports)
Another solid PlayStation 2 Formula One title, but ultimately it's a tad soulless.
Overall 07

F1 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON 2000
(EA Sports/EA/Visual Sciences)
Hardcore F1 fans will find this a little too easy.
Overall 06

F1 RACING CHAMPIONSHIP
(Video System/Ubi Soft)
Good attention to detail, but a lot less fun than its [many] competitors.
Overall 05

FANTAVISION
(SCEE/SCEE)
The world's first fireworks game. Not enormous, but of rare and random beauty.
Overall 07

FIFA 2001
(EA Sports/EA Sports/Canada)
Great graphics, but Second Division gameplay.
Overall 06

FIFA 2002
(EA Sports/EA Sports/Canada)
Despite admirable improvements, this is still a goal down to Pro Evolution.
Overall 07

six of the best

PLATFORMERS



1. REZ

Is it a rhythm action game? A space blaster? A music creation title? Well... How about a gripping fusion of all three that picks you up, bombards your senses with spectacular sights and sounds before depositing you, shaken and euphoric? There you go.

*Rez is out now from SCE.

2. CITY CRISIS

Arcade flavoured helicopter save-em-up that challenges you and your chopper to rescue members of the public from sticky situations and smokey rooftops. Unique fun.

*City Crisis is out now from Toki 2.

3. POLAROID PETE

This side-scrolling game from Japan has you snapping pix of the world around you for a newspaper. Bright brush and surprisingly addictive.

*Polaroid Pete is out now from JVC.

4. FREAK OUT

Possibly the world's first adventure game featuring a girl, her possessed scarf and a twangable, elastic world. As weird as it sounds and twice as much fun to play.

*Freak Out is out now from Sving.

5. HERDY GERDY

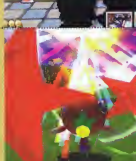
This beautifully realised 3D adventure is a hybrid of One Man And His Dog and The Pied Piper Of Hamelin. A charming pastoral symphony in a field of its own. Superb.

*Herdy Gerdy is out now from Eldos.

6. FANTAVISION

This underrated puzzle game comes in the guise of a 'fireworks simulator' and is every bit as lovely to look at as it is addictive to play. An enchanting and welcome oddity.

*Fantavision is out now from SCE.



★ FORMULA ONE 2001

(SCEE/Studio Liverpool)
Still the best F1 game to reach the PS2 yet. All the drivers, tracks and cars included. Load it up and feel the speed.

Overall 08

FREAK OUT

(Sving/Treasure)
Unique cartoon action-adventure with a kooky Japanese twist. Grab enemies with a bewitched scarf.

Overall 07

★ FUR FIGHTERS

(Acclaim/Bizarre Creations)
Cute fluffy creatures armed to the teeth with shotguns blast each other to pieces. The toy cupboard will never look innocent again.

Overall 06

GJ JOCKEY

(THQ/Koei)
More like an exercise in statistical analysis than a horse racing game, with bland graphics and sound.

Overall 05

GIANTS: CITIZEN KABUTO

(Interplay/Planet Moon)
The Reaper might be cool, but loading times hamper this port of a complex PC battle game.

Overall 06

GIFT

(Cryo Interactive/Ekosystem)
New take on the 3D platformer, but lets its French imagination get in the way of its gameplay.

Overall 06

GLOBAL TOURING CHALLENGE: AFRICA

(Rage/Rage Warrington)
An impressive racer that is further lifted by clever use of interesting locations.

Overall 07

GRANDIA II

(Ubi Soft/GameArts)
Expansive, classic RPG adventuring but with horrible graphics and repetitive, uninvolved gameplay.

Overall 05

★ GRAND THEFT AUTO III

(Rockstar Games/DMA Design)
The original crim sim goes 3D. The game has its flaws, but there's nothing else quite as sick, inventive and funny on the shelves. Buy it.

Overall 08

★ GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC

(SCEE/Polphony Digital)
If you didn't know already, GT3 is the greatest driving game in the world. Buy it now.

Overall 09

G-SURFERS

(Midas Interactive/Blade Interactive)
Futuristic racer that's improved by an innovative track editor.

Overall 07

★ GUILTY GEAR X

(Virgin/Sammy)
Pushes hard at beat-em-up boundaries. The start of a new wave of next-gen 2D fighters.

Overall 08

GUN GRIFFON BLAZE

(Sving/GameArts)
A mech shooter for robot obsessives everywhere.

Overall 07

H30 SURFING

(Take 2/ASCII)
Inadequate surf sim, although the water's well realised.

Overall 04

★ HALF-LIFE

(Vivendi Universal/Valve/Gearbox)
The award-winning PC first-person shooter/adventure arrives on PS2 in resplendent form. An essential purchase.

Overall 09

HEADHUNTER

(SCEE/Amuze)
Dirty Harry meets MGS2 in a world where the law is controlled by bounty hunters. There's a great game here somewhere, but we only got glimpses of it.

Overall 07

HEROES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC

(3DO/3DO)
Patchy PC-style adventure.

Overall 03

HOLOGRAM TIME TRAVELLER

(Digital Leisure/Sega)
It may be called a 'classic' but avoid this like the plague.

Overall 00

★ INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER

(Konami/Ozisoft)
Genuine squads and more instant terrace gratification take ISS up to the PS2 level.

Overall 08

ISS 2

(Konami/ Ozisoft)
More arcadey than PES with better commentary, but dodgy ball physics and animation.

Overall 07

★ JAK AND DAXTER: THE PRECURSOR LEGACY

(SCEE/Naughty Dog)
A brilliant platformer from the makers of Crash Bandicoot introduces two heroes you'll be seeing a lot more of.

Overall 09

★ JAMES BOND 007 IN... AGENT UNDER FIRE

(EA/EA Redwood Shores)
A thrilling single-player Bond experience, with a great Four-player mode and beautiful leading ladies. Almost on a par with N64's GoldenEye.

Overall 08

JEREMY McGRATH SUPERCRUSH WORLD

(Acclaim/Acclaim Studios Salt Lake)
A motocross game that's just like the real thing (minus the realism, thrills, speed, gritty handling and mud).

Overall 03

JET SKI RIDERS

(Eidos/Opus Corporation)
Great water effects and Kawasaki-licensed Jet Skis. Shame about the average racing, though.

Overall 06

KENGO: MASTER OF BUSHIDO

(Ubi Soft/LightWeight)
A padded-out Training mode makes up for this smart ninja fighter's otherwise rather limited nature.

Overall 06

KESSEN

(Electronic Arts/KOEI)
A real-time strategy game set in feudal Japan, where you get to command a huge army, initially confusing, potentially enthralling.

Overall 07

★ KLONOA 2: LUNARIA'S VEIL

(SCEE/Namco)
Cute and cheerful platformer featuring the lovable glove-wearing cat-rabbit hybrid.

Overall 06

KNOCKOUT KINGS 2001

(EA Sports/EA Sports)
A more-than-competent boxing sim. Not good enough to earn its royal status, though.

Overall 06

KURI KURI MIX

(Empire/From Software)
A blend of two-player co-operation and cutesy platformer. An odd but worthwhile addition to any PS2 collection.

Overall 07

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING

(Acclaim/Acclaim)
Violent ballet with a shortage of modes and options. Fine recreation of Pro wrestling.

Overall 05

★ LE MANS 24 HOURS

(Infogrames/Melbourne House)
Accessible for the gamer who's daunted by ultra-accurate sim-style vehicle handling, but has depth and thrills in abundance.

Overall 06

★ LMA MANAGER 2002

(Codemasters/Codemasters)
Brilliant soccer management game that allows you to get as involved as you want.

Overall 08

LOTUS CHALLENGE

(Virgin Interactive/Kuju)
With a whole back catalogue of branded cars, it's a Lotus fan's dream. It's just a shame their speed isn't conveyed.

Overall 05

★ MADDEN NFL 2001

(EA Sports/EA Sports)
A rewarding and complete NFL game. Could convert non-believers to the sport.

Overall 08

★ MADDEN NFL 2002

(EA Sports/EA Sports)
Exemplary American football title with a pristine pedigree. Virtually flawless, aside from being just another yearly update of a franchise. Go buy!

Overall 09

★ MAXIMO

(THQ/ Capcom)
A tribute to Ghosts 'N Goblins and an excellent mix of retro and modern gaming, resulting in one of the strongest 3D platformers available.

Overall 08

★ MDK2 ARMAGEDDON

(Interplay/BioWare)
Originally a game on Dreamcast and PS, this third-person action shooter in space has lost nothing in translation. Has three playable characters and is destined to be a cult classic.

Overall 08

★ METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SONS OF LIBERTY

(Konami/KCEJ)
A must-own, state-of-the-art tactical espionage action game that's reason enough to buy a PS2. A superbly paced, surprising story with intelligence and soul. Unbeatable sound and graphics – a benchmark for future PS2 titles.

Overall 10

MIDNIGHT CLUB

(Rockstar/Angel Studios)
Speedy, urban racing that boasts huge and action-packed New York and London environments. Sadly, the gameplay ain't that great.

Overall 04

MODERNGROOVE: MINISTRY OF SOUND

(Ubi Soft/Moderngroove)
An entertaining lightweight generator, containing five full dance albums.

Overall 06

MONSTERS, INC.

(SCEE/Disney Interactive)
Disney Platform game, based on the film. Initially amusing but sloppy and basic with a lifespan of no more than a few hours, though the film clips are entertaining.

Overall 04

MOTO GP

(SCEE/Namco)
Gron Turismo on two wheels? ish. A fantastic motorbike sim that rewards repeated play.

Overall 07

MOTO GP 2

(3DO/3DO)
A refreshing bike racer. Slightly repetitive gameplay and a shallow multiplayer, but slick, fast and realistic. Excellent 3D graphics and race replay facility.

Overall 07

the scoreboard

MOTOR MAYHEM
(Infogrames/Beyond Games)
Unoriginal deathmatch-based vehicle blasting.
Overall 05

MTV MUSIC GENERATOR 2
(Codemasters/Jester)
Home DJ sampler/mixer music maker. It's enormous fun and night-on-fautless. This is exciting and well put together - pick it up and start making your own choons!
Overall 09

MX 2002 FEATURING RICKY CARMICHAEL
(THQ/Pacific Coast Power)
Polished and engaging motocross sim that utilises its subject matter to great effect.
Overall 07

MX RIDER
(Infogrames/Paradigm)
Motocross/supercross sim that lacks the true grittiness and excitement of the sport.
Overall 06

NBA HOOPZ
(Midway/Eurocom)
Instant arcade-styled basketball sim but there are better ones on the street.
Overall 06

NBA LIVE 2001
(EA Sports/EA Sports Canada)
Solid and playable. Thrills are thin on the ground, though.
Overall 06

NBA LIVE 2002
(EA Sports/EA Sports Canada)
An update of NBA Live 2001. Only for true basketball nuts.
Overall 06

NBA STREET
(EA Sports Big/EA Sports)
Great looks, great to play, but not what most will want. There's room for improvement.
Overall 06

NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB
(Acclaim/Acclaim Studios Austin)
American football game that has unique features, but unable to compete with Madden 2002.
Overall 08

NHL 2001
(EA Sports/EA Sports Canada)
EA Sports' perennial ice hockey licence that hits the mark. As Jamie Oliver might say, "Puckal".
Overall 08

NHL 2002
(EA Sports/EA Sports Canada)
The definitive ice hockey videogame, and a marked improvement on NHL 2001.
Overall 08

NHL HITZ 2002
(Midway/Black Box)
A satisfying, if short-lived, arcade-style ice hockey game.
Overall 06

NY RACE
(Wanadoo/Kallisto)
Average future taxi racer, based on the opening sequence of Luc Besson's sci-fi epic *The Fifth Element*. Nothing crazy to see here.
Overall 05

ONI
(Rockstar/Bungle Software)
New character animation in an enjoyable third-person sci-fi romp.
Overall 07

ONIMUSHA: WARRIORS
(Capcom/Capcom)
Impressive survival horror that lets the PlayStation 2 run riot. Does suffer from an iffy PAL conversion, though.
Reviewed OPS2#09/Overall 08

OPERATION WINBACK
(Midas Interactive/KOEI)
Lacks variety, but still manages to be an enjoyable stealth shooter, nevertheless.
Overall 06

ORPHEN
(Activision/Shade Inc)
Disappointing anime-inspired Japanese RPG.
Overall 04

PARAPPA THE RAPPER 2
(SCEE/NanoOn-sha)
Rhythm action game from Japan in which you play a rapping dog. Simple but compelling gameplay. Short life span and only really worth revisiting for nostalgia.
Overall 07

PARIS-DAKAR RALLY
(Acclaim/Broadsword Interactive)
Based on the race of the same name, this sim does little to inspire interest.
Reviewed OPS2#13/Overall 05

PENNY RACERS
(Midas/Takara)
A half-baked and underfed GT3, with just a few good tracks to recommend it.
Overall 04

POLICE 24/7
(Konami/KCET)
Basic cop-shot light gun game with motion capture option. Frantic and fast but lacks structure and individuality. Just another on-rails shoot-'em-up.
Overall 05

POOLMASTER
(T2/Aask)
Dull pool sim despite some tidy ball physics.
Overall 05

PORTAL RUNNER
(3DO/3DO)
Vikki, of Army Men notoriety, gets her own title. It's the best of a bad bunch.
Reviewed OPS2#13/Overall 05

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER
(Konami/Konami TYO)
Konami TYO updates ISS Pro Evolution and creates the best PS2 football sim yet.
Overall 09

PROJECT EDEN
(Eidos/Core Design)
Look beyond some not-great visuals and you'll lose weeks to this complex and satisfying first-person shooter/adventure game.
Overall 08

QUAKE III
(EA/Id & Bullfrog)
In four-player, this FPS is the best multiplayer yet. A technical tour de force, it runs like greased lightning and looks absolutely gorgeous.
Overall 09

RAYMAN M
(Ubi Soft/Ubi Studios France)
Based primarily on multiplayer action. Some good ideas, but the gameplay is nothing new.
Overall 06

RAYMAN REVOLUTION
(Ubi Soft/Ubi Soft)
Animation-quality graphics elevate this classic platformer starring a disoriented hero. A title worth of PS2.
Overall 08

RC REVENGE PRO
(Acclaim/Acclaim Cheltenham)
A distinct lack of any discernable speed makes this an avoidable kart racer.
Overall 03

READY 2 RUMBLE: ROUND 2
(Midway/Midway)
A marvellous, arcade-based comedy boxing game, pitting ridiculous cartoon fighters against each other.
Overall 07

RED FACTION
(THQ/Vollition)
Ace first-person shooter that melds MOS-style tactics and the all-out blasting of the hallowed *Quake III*. Marred only by some average level design.
Overall 08

RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X
(Capcom Eurosoft/Capcom)
A captivating story, cinematic atmosphere, kinetic action, frights, thrills and copious amounts of blood-letting. Give in to its disgustingly depraved clutches. You know you want to.
Overall 09

REZ
(SCEE/Sega [UGA])
Fight computer viruses from within the system. Exploring the relationship between sound and colour this techno shooter provides pure gameplay.
Overall 09

RIDGE RACER V
(SCEE/Namco)
A popular racer, but high hopes were scuppered by the limited size and lack of originality.
Overall 07

RING OF RED
(Konami/KCE)
A mech RTS that's fun? Oh yes. A must-buy for the discerning robo-fetishist after something different.
Overall 08

ROBOT WARLORDS
(Midas Interactive/Dazz)
Many other superior mech games make this redundant in a somewhat minority genre in Australia.
Overall 04

ROBOT WARS
(BBC Multimedia/Climax)
TV show be-his rarety work. This could have been a whole lot better. Stick to watching the real bot battles instead.
Overall 05

RUGBY
(EA Sports/Creative Assembly)
So far the only PS2 game to represent this sport. More akin to Madden than FIFA in approach, a highly enjoyable and refined take on the sport. EA Sports does it again.
Overall 08

RUMBLE RACING
(EA/EA)
Fast and furious arcade stunt racer that has tons of challenge and replay value, especially in Two-Player mode. Full of totally insane courses to put you through you paces.
Overall 08

RUNE: VIKING WARLORD
(Take 2/Human Head)
A Viking slash-'em-up that should have been confined to the Dark Ages.
Overall 04

SALT LAKE 2002
(Ozisoft/Attention To Detail)
Souless Winter Olympics game. Decent weather effects but the majority of events are rather tedious. Not much variety and a limited life span.
Overall 03

SHADOW OF MEMORIES
(Konami/KCET)
Filmic adventure that keeps the surprises coming with a serpentine plot.
Overall 08

SHAUN PALMER'S PRO SNOWBOARDER
(Activision/Dearsoft)
Basically Tony Hawk's on snow. It's an exhilarating sport, but the gameplay is unimaginative and the controls sluggish.
Overall 06

SILENT HILL 2
(Konami/KCET Team Silent)
One of the most atmospheric and genuinely frightening titles on PS2. Like all of your worst nightmares rolled in to one relentless videogame.
Overall 08

SILENT SCOPE
(Konami/KCCE)
Slack but simple shooting gallery-style game where you play a police sniper. A great launch title that we're still playing.
Reviewed OPS2#01/Overall 08

SILENT SCOUT 2
(Konami/Konami TYO)
A worthwhile update of this arcade sniper sim, though the formula is looking tired now.
Overall 07

SILPHED: THE LOST PLANET
(Swing/Treasure/GameArts)
Tedious top-down shooter, that shouldn't be on PS2.
Overall 03

SIR ALEX FERGUSON'S PLAYER MANAGER 2002
(3DO/Ancore)
Adopt footy management sim, but lacks the killer goal.
Overall 06

SKY ODYSSEY
(SCEE/Cross for SCEI)
A flight sim where - somewhat unusually - you don't have to shoot anything. Just complete crazy missions.
Overall 05

SLED STORM
(EA/EA BIG)
A mazed-out, splashy remake of the PSone racing classic, very much in the SSX mould.
Overall 06

SMASH COURT TENNIS PRO TOURNAMENT
(SCEE/Namco)
Adeft, stylish game that suffers from disproportionate leaps in difficulty that may prove a little off-putting to casual gamers.
Overall 07

SMUGGLER'S RUN 2: HOSTILE TERRITORIES
(Rockstar/Angel Studios)
Impressively big, fast and frantic, but not much different from its predecessor.
Overall 07

SOUL REAVER 2
(Eidos Interactive/Crystal Dynamics)
Soul-sucking fantasy adventure that centres around the exploits of Raziel and his huge Soul Reaver sword.
Overall 07

SPACE ACE
(Digital Leisure/Cinematronics)
Horrific and ancient arcade port. The original was cool. This isn't.
Overall 01

SPACE RACE
(3DO/3DO)
The cartoon kart racer in its simplest form. Lacks originality and is a poor Mario Kart rip-off.
Overall 05

SPLASHDOWN
(Infogrames/Rainbow Studios)
Above average Sea-Do racer, with impressive water effects. The racing is sluggish, though.
Overall 07

SPY HUNTER
(Midway/Paradigm)
Pretend to be James Bond. Captures the spirit of the original game and adds further shiny next-gen knobs.
Overall 08

SSX
(EA Sports Big/EA Sports Canada)
Inventive rainbow coloured high speed snowboard game packed with crazy courses, and crazier characters.
Overall 09

SSX TRICKY
(EA Sports Big/EA Sports Canada)
The sequel to the PS2's sleeper hit is now bigger and better. New courses included!
Overall 09

STAR WARS: STARFIGHTER
(Activision/LucasArts)
Memorising 3D Star Wars blaster with engaging missions and film-perfect sound effects.
Overall 09

STAR WARS: SUPER BOMBARD RACING
(Activision/Lucas Learning)
Banal cartoon kart race. The Force is weak with this one.
Overall 05

STATE OF EMERGENCY
(Take 2/VIS Entertainment)
A shallow but worryingly enjoyable game that puts the player at the centre of a riot.
Overall 06

STREET FIGHTER EX3
(Capcom Eurosoft/Arika)
A decent enough cult 2D/3D brawler. Has its devout fans.
Overall 06

SUMMONER
(THQ/Vollition)
Although confined to strict RPG plot confines, this is an entertaining spectacle with expert storytelling.
Overall 06

SUPER TRUCKS
(Jester/Jester)
Although confined to strict racing that fails to convey the impression of racing mammoth trucks.
Overall 04

SUPERCAR STREET CHALLENGE
(Activision/Exakt)
A by-the-book arcade racing game round desolate cities. Nothing to recommend it.
Overall 04

glossary

Just got your PS2? It's your first console ever and you've bought the best magazine to give the latest and most up-to-date information? But don't have a clue what you're going on about? Well, without wanting to patronise those gamers who've been round since the ZX Spectrum by spelling out the meaning of gaming terms and acronyms in the reviews and previews, here's your 'at a glance' guide to all things PS2 and technical.

Afterburn: An extra kick of power in flight sims.
AI: Artificial Intelligence.
Analogue: Re. Dual Shock 2. Registering degrees of input, as opposed to digital's on/off status.
Boards: Snowboards or games featuring the alpine sport.
Coin-op: Coin-operated arcade videogames.
Cut-scene: Explanatory, non-playable scene in videogame (also FMV).
CPU: Central Processor Unit. Brains of PS2.
Dev kits: Programmable PS2s used by developers.
D-pad: Direction pad on

PS2 controller.
Dual Shock controller: Controller for PSone.
Dual Shock 2: Controller designed for PS2 (with analogue).
ECTS: European Counter Trade Show.
E3: Electronic Entertainment Expo (US).
Frame rate: Number of images drawn per second in games. Higher frame rate = smoother animation.
FPS: First-Person Shooter (eg Quake III).
Hack 'n' slash: Refers to game (usually fantasy) featuring blade combat.
High res: High

resolution (graphics).
HUD: Head Up Display. Screen furniture such as map, speedometer, etc.
Iconography: Graphical shorthand defining game, genre etc.
Low res: Refers to poor quality graphics.
L3: Pressing down on the PS2 controller's left joystick.
Mini-games: Bonus, playable games found in larger titles.
Polygon: Building block of 3D computer graphics.
PSone: The precursor to PS2. If you don't know what this is then frankly there's no hope for you.

Real-time: When one second of game time equals one second in real time.
RPG: Role-playing game.
RTS: Real-time strategy.
R3: Pressing down on the PS2 controller's right joystick.
Sim: Simulation.
Strafe: Move sideways while looking straight.
USB: Port to connect peripherals such as keyboard to PS2.
□: There's a term, word or phrase that's still taxing your brain cells, let us know and we'll include it here.

Can't get hold of one of the games in **The Shortlist?** Something gone wrong? Need to check a release date? Here's the definitive list of all Aussie PS2 publishers.

six of the best

WHAT OUR JOSH IS PLAYING:



1. STATE OF EMERGENCY

This game has become an addiction. Guns, guts and an evil trade organisation are the perfect ingredients for a revolution. On the other hand, if you just want to blow stuff up and kill people for the hell of it, there's always chaos mode.

2. DEVIL MAY CRY

In a dark gothic underworld, there is no way to resist this classic battle of good versus evil. Dante's moves are slick and deadly, thanks to his Thunder Sword and a touch of the devil.



3. GRAN TURISMO 3

What else can I say? It's impossible not to enjoy this. For such an early PS2 game, the graphics are mind blowing, with detail right down to brake pads that you can see glowing from the heat during replays.



4. EA RUGBY

Rugby is a game of tactics, skill and continuity. EA has incorporated the skill and a need to really learn the game to enjoy this one. Be warned: you must warm up before playing. My thumbs are still sore!



5. KNOCKOUT KINGS 2002

Not exactly the most challenging of games, but when you get together with a group of mates and a few beers, it's a lot of fun. More enjoyable than watching the real thing since you can become world champion!



6. SILENT HILL 2

It is possible to really get lost in Silent Hill. Everything draws the player into the game. As soon as I have the chance, I'll be locking myself in a dark room and starting from where I finished on my last visit to the creepy Silent Hill.



SWING AWAY GOLF

(EA Sports/T&E Soft)
Cutesy PSone golf sim that's let down by a poor PS2 conversion.
Overall 63

TARZAN FREERIDE

(Ubisoft/Disney Interactive)
Based on a Disney film of the same name, this tries to be different with 'surfing' tree branches, but it doesn't work.
Overall 64

TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT

(SCEE/Namco)
Fantastically playable and graphically spectacular beat-'em-up. The tagging moves should keep the Tekken faithful happy until the next 'proper' installment reaches the shelves. Meanwhile, keep your eyes peeled for Tekken 4.
Overall 68

TEST DRIVE: OFFROAD WIDE OPEN

(Infogrames/Angel Studios)
A tidy but limited offroad racer, from the makers of Smuggler's Run.
Overall 66

TG DARE DEVIL

(Kemco/Papaya Studios)
Mission-based retro car racer that fails to provide innovation or excitement.
Overall 65

THE BOUNCER

(SCEE/Squaresoft)
A fun, accessible brawler whose adventuring elements are fairly limited.
Overall 65

THE HOODS

(SCEE/Runeart)
Strictly for gamers of pre-school age, this is a faithful and entertaining reproduction of the popular kids' show.
Overall 68

THE MUMMY RETURNS

(Vivendi Universal/Bivd Games)
Sub-standard, adventure-based movie tie-in. You're better sticking to the more reliable Tomb Raider collection.
Overall 65

THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE

(EA/Radical Entertainment)
It's Crazy Taxi but with Bart and Homer behind the wheel.
Overall 66

THE WEAKEST LINK

(Activision/Activision)
You'll get more enjoyment playing along with the TV show than you will from putting up with the viper-tongued host.
Overall 64

THEME PARK WORLD

(EA/Bullfrog)
Take on the role of a theme park tycoon for a day in this engaging god sim, where pleasing the crowds and getting those turnstyles a-splinnin' is your prime directive.
Overall 67

THIS IS FOOTBALL 2002

(SCEE/Team SoHo)
An atmospheric and playable addition to a revived series.
Overall 67

THUNDERHAWK: OPERATION PHOENIX

(Eidos/Core Design)
A brave attempt to blend arcade and sim with choppers.
Overall 67

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2001

(EA Sports/EA Sports)
Authentic golf sim, a tad undermined by a random control system.
Overall 66

TIME CRISIS 2

(SCEE/Namco)
PS2's first on-rails light gun title sets the standard for others to follow. Has a great two-player co-op mode.
Overall 69

TIMESPLITTERS

(Eidos/Free Radical Design)
Fun, fast, frantic and inventive first-person shooter. Buy it for the addictive split-screen multiplayer madness.
Overall 69

TOKYO XTREME RACER

(Crave/Ubisoft/Genki)
Sedate, and thus dull, racer.
Overall 64

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3

(Activision/Neversoft)
Fantastic skate sim that's perfect to play whether you've got two minutes or two hours to spare. Notable for being the first PAL game to have online network play, too.
Overall 69

TOP GUN

(Virgin Interactive/Digital Integrations)
A flight sim that seems to have been designed by people who have never even seen a plane. A few arcade thrills.
Overall 64

TWISTED METAL: BLACK

(SCEE/Incoagint)
On a post-nuclear-war planet, it's time to drive around in frenzied vehicle-based hedonism. This is everything that you'd expect a Twisted Metal game to be on PS2 – and then some.
Overall 68

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

(Take 2/Silicon Dreams)
A very run of the mill soccer title which, with its very narrow focus on a single tournament, has extremely limited appeal. If you have ISS or FIFA, you don't need this.
Overall 66

UNREAL TOURNAMENT

(Infogrames/Epic Games)
A satisfyingly gory, totally over-the-top and immensely playable first-person shooter.
Overall 68

VAMPIRE NIGHT

(SCEE/Namco)
A vampire-blasting light gun extravaganza that looks great but has questionable replay value once the bad boys are all put to rest. Again. Great for building bulging biceps, though.
Overall 68

VICTORIOUS BOXERS

(Empire Interactive/ESP)
Offbeat Japanese boxing title that lacks the killer punch.
Overall 64

WACKY RACES STARRING DASTARDLY AND MUTLEY

(Infogrames/Infogrames)
Misty-eyed fans of the TV series will love the visuals. A shame the game isn't all that great.
Overall 66

WALT DISNEY'S JUNGLE BOOK GROOVE PARTY

(Ubisoft/Disney Interactive)
The game guaranteed to get to dancing round your living room like a loon.
Overall 64

WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE? 2ND EDITION

(Eidos/Revolution)
Scary animation of Tarrant and easy questions make this a chore. That is our final answer.
Overall 64

WILD WILD RACING

(Rage/Rage)
Off-road buggy-racing game with initially discouraging handling. Stick with it, though, and the Stunt mode can become quite addictive.
Overall 66

WIPEOUT FUSION

(SCEE/Studio Liverpool)
Style and substance are here in the most fully realised Wipeout yet. This future racer is as smart and extreme as it gets. With a cracking soundtrack.
Overall 69

WOODY WOODPECKER: ESCAPE FROM BUZZ BUZZARD'S PARK

(3DO/3DO)
Unoriginal Platform adventure with a friendly cartoon look and solid, brightly coloured graphics.
Overall 63

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER 2002

(Codemasters/Blade)
Extremely playable snooker sim that may convert sceptics. Take part in the all-star tournament playing as Hendry or Doherty. Incredibly playable.
Overall 68

WORLD DESTRUCTION LEAGUE: THUNDER TANKS

(3DO/3DO)
Arcade tank sim that's brilliant in Four-Player Deathmatch mode. Lacks lasting appeal in One-Player mode, though.
Overall 67

WORMS BLAST

(Team 17/Ubisoft)
A Tetris-like departure from the usual Worms fare, but one that lacks depth.
Overall 66

WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

(SCEE/Evolution Studios)
The most realistic, exciting rally experience ever committed to a videogame. This is a pristine example of next-generation programming that no self-respecting gamer should be without.
Overall 69

WWF SMACKDOWN! JUST BRING IT!

(THQ/Yuke's)
Step into the spandex pants of The Rock and Chumz. This is without a doubt the most realistic representation of the WWF experience on a console yet. Top stuff.
Overall 68

ZONE OF THE ENDERS

(Konami/KCEJ)
Cool mech thriller from Metel Geor's Hideo Kojima, with bonus MSG2 demo just to get you in the mood.
Overall 69

Acclaim

02 9674 5900
www.acclaim.com
"Too House" Level 4, 28 Clarendon St
South Melbourne, Vic 3205

Activision Pty. Ltd.

02 8876 5719
www.activision.com
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Epping, NSW 2121

Electronic Arts

02 9264 6999
www.easports.com.au
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Surry Hills, NSW 2010

Interplay Australia

02 9431 1311
www.interplay.com
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St. Leonards, NSW 2064

QuSoft (Infogrames)

02 9666 0120
www.generation.com.au
32 Bowden St
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Red Ant Enterprises Pty. Ltd.

02 9862 3812
www.red-ant.com.au
Unit 1, 1 Short St
Chatswood, NSW 2065

Sony Computer Entertainment

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www.sce.net.au
Level 1, 63-73 Ann St
Surry Hills, NSW 2010

Take 2 Interactive

02 9482 3455
www.take2interactive.com.au
Unit 5, 6-18 Bridge Rd
Hornsby, NSW 2077

THQ Asia Pacific Pty. Ltd.

03 9573 9200
www.thq.com
Unit 2, 578 St. Kilda Rd
Melbourne, Vic 3004

Ubisoft Entertainment

02 9501 7722
www.ubisoft.com
Level 3, 111-117 Devonshire St
Surry Hills, NSW 2010

Vivendi Universal Interactive Australia Pty. Ltd.

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WWF DVDS - HUGE ONLY BLOKS

WWF madness just keeps rolling on and *OPS2* have 15 WWF DVDs up for grabs! We have *Divas - Tropical Pleasure*, *Funniest Moments*, *Best of 2001* and *No Way Out* - and each one is an official release from the series. If you love your wrestling and have already burnt a ring in your copy of *WWF SmackDown!* Just bring it from excessive play - then you'll love these gems! What's more, make sure you mark your calendars down for the huge 'SmackDown' event that's scheduled to be held at Colonial Stadium, Melbourne in August. It's going to be the biggest WWF event ever held in the Southern Hemisphere!

For your chance, just write in and tell us who your favourite wrestler is and why - and don't forget to tell us which DVD you'd prefer. For everyone else though, these DVDs can be found at good retailers everywhere! Mark your envelopes 'Painful cuddles'.



FIFA WORLD CUP - KICKIN' BACK

The world's biggest single sporting event is almost upon us and EA Sports are gearing up to release the Official videogame. This gem is an entirely different ball game [sic] to *FIFA 2002*, and features all the teams that have made it into the main World Cup draw. But there's no need to fret, EA has included the Socceroos even after that fateful morning playing Uruguay on their home turf in Montevideo! This month, *OPS2* has an extra special competition for you!

Five winners will each pick themselves up a copy of the game but to be eligible you'll need to study the screenshot carefully...

We've removed the ball from the picture, but just tell us the co-ordinates where you think the ball is'. Easy? Then write in now! Write your co-ordinates on the back of an envelope marked 'Soccer Shocker'.



STATE OF EMERGENCY - THIS IS CHAOS

When it was released, *State of Emergency* broke many boundaries. Not only did it test limits of censors and personal moral codes everywhere for its graphic content, but it also opened up new areas of gameplay opportunities.

As one of the truly controversial games of recent times, *State of Emergency* will always have its place in videogame history. Want one? *OPS2* has five copies of the game to give away. Each winner will also get a blow up baseball bat, a t-shirt and a rare *State of Emergency* poster.

To be in the running, all you have to do is tell us one other game that games company Rockstar have been responsible for. All envelopes should be marked 'It's a riot'.



VIRTUA FIGHTER 4 - IT'S A DUST UP!

Reviewed in *OPS2* issue 02 *Virtua Fighter 4* has thrown down the gauntlet to other beat 'em ups like the *Dead or Alive* and *Tekken* games. This game is almost a perfect version of the supremely popular arcade game. Its visuals and complex fighting system are bound to become its trademark as well as its most recognisable strengths. The beauty of the game needs to be seen to be believed. *Virtua Fighter 4*'s background detail sets a new precedent for visual quality within the genre and the bruising action matches anything seen in the likes of *Tekken*.

Tag Tournament

OPS2 has five copies to give away and you have as good a chance as anybody! All you have to do is tell us in fifteen words or less why you deserve a copy more than your best friend does! Envelopes should be marked 'Rough Stuff' and sent to the usual address.



How to Enter

Send entries to OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au with the name of the competition in the subject line or alternatively, send envelopes via snail mail to Official PlayStation Magazine, PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction NSW, 2022. Entries should be clearly marked and include your name, age, phone number, address and the name of the competition you are entering. All competitions close June 10, 2002 and winners will be published in the August Issue of *OPS2*, on sale July 17, 2002.



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